Hafa Adai!

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CUC engines years overdue for maintenance. PAGE 3

MBA rules Academic Challenge Bee. PAGE 6

Off-island referrals see 27 pct. spike in FY '08

MRO anticipates a surge in medical referrals due to economic slowdown

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Medical Referral Office, which has a non-personnel budget of only $5,172 in fiscal year 2009, yesterday said it is projecting a surge in the number of patients referred off island for treatment as a result of the economic slowdown that forces residents to cancel their private health insurance and turn to the government instead for help.

"We are seeing an increase in the number of referrals," the MRO said yesterday.

MRO referred 716 patients to off island medical providers in FY 2008, a 27-percent increase from only 565 patients in FY 2007.

As expected, medical referral spending also increased—from close to $4 million in FY 2007 to about $5 million in FY 2008.

The number of referrals and the level of spending are expected to

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Ex-CTC chairman gets 5-year prison sentence

Fitzgerald told to pay $88,202.92

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has slapped a five-year prison term on James Michael P. Fitzgerald, the former chairman of the defunct Commonwealth Telecommunications Commission, for stealing $88,202.92 from CTC by issuing unauthorized checks to himself.

"Fitzgerald used government funds…he was entrusted with

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IN TRANSITION TO FEDERAL IMMIGRATION

US citizens in CNMI don't need passport to travel to Guam but…

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The start of the transition to federal immigration—whether it will be on June 1 or at a later date—will not require additional travel documents for U.S. citizens in the CNMI wishing to travel to Guam, Hawaii or the U.S. mainland,

ON THE NET
www.cbp.gov

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NMI dominates Guam festival, bags 9 awards

Manta Band gets Sweepstakes Trophy

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI dominated the entire 5th Tumon Bay Music Festival after it bagged nine major awards in various contest categories.

Saipan Southern High School's Manta Ray Band and the DoReMi Music School of Saipan were the only delegates from the Commonwealth, competing against over 40 other musical groups in the weeklong event. Held since March 14, hundreds of students and sev-

RELATED NEWS
DoReMi violinist wins gold in Guam music festival.
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FIRST TIME ON SAIPAN
The crew members of USS *Hampton* prepare to disembark after docking for the first time at the Port of Saipan yesterday morning. The 362-foot Los Angeles-class submarine has approximately 110 officers and crew who are here for rest and recreation until Monday. The fast attack submarine is set to depart on Monday after days of rest and recreation on the island.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

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OPINION METER
This week's poll:
Should the NMC board reconsider and reinstate Agnes McPhetres as a regent?
Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

AIG Backlash
Joining a wave of public anger, President Barack Obama blistered insurance giant AIG for "recklessness and greed."
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NMC Alumni

Jesse Torres shares his thoughts on the importance of the newly formed Northern Marianas College Alumni Association.
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Star Power
Michelle Obama has nothing on Julia Roberts.
LIFE & STYLE...Page 20



Local

DoReMi violinist wins gold in Guam music festival

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A 12-year-old boy from Saipan delivered an amazing performance in the solo violin category at the 5th Tumon Bay Music Festival in Guam en route to bagging the gold medal Sunday night.



Twelve-year-old Zhen Yu Su, left, of Grace Christian Academy, wins the gold medal under the solo performance in violin category in the 2009 Tumon Bay Festival on Guam over the weekend. Also in photo is his violin instructor, Ao Zhang, president of DoReMi Music School in Garapan.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Zhen Yu Su was the lone delegate to the festival by Saipan's DoReMi Music School.

Accompanied by Ao Zhang, his teacher/coach and founder of the school, Su wowed the crowd, which included a number of talented professional musicians.

Besides the Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Band, Do Re Mi was the only other Saipan group that joined the weeklong competition.

Su is the youngest son of Chen Hong Chao and Su Ying Qi. He is a seventh grader at Grace Christian Academy and has been an outstanding student of DoReMi since he was 6 years old.

Elated by the first major off-island honor bagged by his student, Zhang said Su will continue to shine and strive for more recognition.

Su's rendition of *Zigeunerweisen* (1847) by Pablo de Sarasete impressed festival jurors who considered the piece among the most difficult ones to play.

Zhang said his ward has been practicing the piece for more than three months. Because participation in the festival was a last-minute decision, the young violinist decided to play one of his favorites.

"I was so nervous at first," Su admitted yesterday. He regained his confidence, however, when he saw the approving faces of everyone in the crowd, "It made me feel great!"

Su's performance took seven to eight minutes.

His mother, Chen Hong Chao, said she is very proud of her son's achievement. "I am confident that my son can win it…because I have seen his hard work and his capabilities," she said.

She said that since the boy's enrollment in music school, his interest in music has only heightened. "I am very proud of my son and I wish he will continue to explore music," she added.

Zhang disclosed that after the Guam competition, Su was offered to join the Guam Symphony Orchestra for its scheduled series of concerts in Guam.

In January, he was also invited by noted musical conductor Stephen Bednarzyk to a performance where Su will play the violin.

"We've very excited for all these opportunities for him," Zhang added.

DoReMi was founded in April 1992. Besides the annual grand recital of its students, the school also throws benefit concerts for senior citizens, the hospital, Flame Tree Festival, and other community events.

Zhang, who is the music instructor and founder of the school, entered Tian Jin Conservatory of Music in 1970 and had played with Tian Jin Orchestra. In 1991, he came to Saipan and started his school.

FOR FAILING TO KEEP RECORDS

Labor bars corp. from hiring foreign workers

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Labor has ordered the permanent disqualification of a corporation from hiring alien workers for not keeping records of hours and wages and unlawfully charging fees from its masseuse.

Labor hearing officer Herbert D. Soll said that Yan Li Corp. and its general manager, Luan Lifen, are permanently barred from employing nonresident workers in the CNMI.

"No reconsideration of this sanction should be entertained until a substantial satisfaction of the award is made," Soll said.

Yan Li Corp. and Lifen were found jointly liable to pay masseuse Li Min $4,094.40 in unpaid wages and unlawfully charged fees.

The hearing officer authorized Min to seek recovery from the bonding company if Yan Li Corp. and Lifen do not pay the award.

Soll did not issue a transfer order since Min already has an immediate relative status after marrying James Macklin, a U.S. citizen.

"In weighing the evidence presented, I conclude that [Min] was truthful and convincing in her testimony," Soll said.

According to Labor records, Min was a nonresident worker when she filed a Labor complaint against Yan Li Corp. and Lifen.

Min worked in the garment industry for a period of years. She then transferred to the employment of Yan Li Corp. in April 2007. She was to work as a masseuse in Yan Li Corp.'s beauty parlor.

The corporation's business was entirely operated and controlled by Luan Lifen. The corporation exists as an entity in the Commonwealth, but it does not appear that any of the designated officers participate in the decision-making or in the operation or its activities.

Neither the corporation or its general manager, Lifen, kept required records of hours and wages for the work performed by Min.

In contrast, Min kept a reasonable account of the time that she worked and the money that she received.

Soll said that Min's account of the dates and hours worked supports a finding of wages owed in the net amount of $2,894.40.

Min testified that she was asked to pay $1,200 in order to have her application processed in 2007.

Soll said he finds the complainant's testimony with respect to the application fee correct and that the respondents must reimburse her for that amount in addition to wages owed.

CUC engines years overdue for maintenance

By KRISTI EATON
Kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Each of the eight engines at the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s Power Plant 1 have run at least 10,000 hours over the recommended maintenance plan.

As of this month, engine one is in most need of an overhaul. It has run 61,019 over the advised timeframe for an overhaul. If it ran continuously for 24 hours a day, it would be nearly seven years past the recommended limit. However, the engine has been under maintenance since November 2006.

Engine eight, which recorded the lowest number of hours in excess, has run 10,276 hours, or, if ran continuously, it is more than a year overdue for a major overhaul. The engine is one of two currently operational at the power plant. The other running engine—engine six—is 48,394 hours over the guideline. That calculates to 5.5 years.

The numbers were listed in the utility agency's stimulus grant fund application. Under funds provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, CUC is seeking $36 million to purchase three new engines producing seven megawatts each.

Operating capacity

CUC sets an operating capacity that allows the engines to run but takes into consideration the need for maintenance, CUC executive director Antonio Muña said. For example, engine six and eight are not running at their maximum capacity of 13 megawatts.

"Engines six and eight are rated at 13 megawatts but, depending on the weather, if cooler, we can run 4.5, maybe 5 [megawatts]," he said. "But if the weather is hot then we're looking at 4 to 4.5 [megawatts]."

This way, he added, the engines can continue to run.

"We're keeping operation within certain limits to allow us to get production, but respect the fact that the engines, that the maintenance, has been deferred," Muña said.

He said it's important the employees and the engines themselves are safe.

Maintenance periods are set by the engines' manufacturer in accordance with the results of a test bench performance of a test engine, according to a power production specialist. From this test, the manufacturer can predict that at a certain point, some engine components will reach their maximum usage and will need to be replaced. If this is not done, he said, the warranty—if there were one—would be voided because of a greater chance for future problems. The capacity will also decrease due to loose compression and higher operating temperatures.

The specialist said if delayed an overhaul is harder to accomplish and takes more time because more parts will have to be replaced.

Spare parts

Acquiring the necessary parts continues to be a struggle for CUC. According to the grant application, when the engines were installed in 1991, insufficient parts were stocked, and, because the engines are unique to the Pacific region, there are no parts available from other engines in CUC's system or other nearby utilities.

"Further, access to spare parts is limited to Mitsubishi in Japan or Man B&W in Germany," the application said. "Thus, CUC is captive to a very limited source of supply that is subject to non-competitive pricing from companies in distant locations."

Rota problems

Likewise, the engines on Rota are not maintained according to any routine preventative maintenance plan schedule, according to the application. Peak demand is greater than the capacity of one unit, so taking either of the two offline for extended periods adversely affects power production.

Since at least 2005, the Rota deputy director has urged CUC to provide supplies for maintenance, but as of this month, no progress has been made, the application stated. CUC is relying on purchasing power from the Rota Hotel Resort that generates its own power.

A 1994 management audit report predicted such problems for the islands of Saipan and Rota, saying the practice of limiting maintenance funding jeopardizes the reliability of the equipment. If it is not corrected immediately, the report said, "CUC faces the possible loss of key generation units, particularly on the islands of Saipan and Rota."

"CUC has found this prediction to be true," the grant application said, "as this is one cause of the most recent crisis that has affected the basic health and infrastructure needs of the CNMI community."

Water shortage continues in Lower Gualo Rai

Lower Gualo Rai continues to experience water shortage due to a broken water pump, and relief isn't expected for two weeks.

The water problem in Gualo Rai started on Feb. 18, said Bruce Megarr, deputy director of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s water and wastewater division. CUC had hoped to receive the necessary equipment for repairs by last week, but Megarr said yesterday that it should be delivered in the next two weeks.

The utility company is waiting for a new pump to be delivered, he said, adding that CUC is not waiting for the high quality stainless steel pump.

"We want to get water moving out of that well as soon as we possibly can," he said. "If that means a lower quality stainless pump, so be it. We're not going to make our customers wait. When it becomes available, we put it in."

Upper As Matuis, Tanapag and parts of Puerto Rico have also experienced water shortages, with some areas only getting two to three hours of water a day, Megarr said. However, he said Garapan now has almost 24-hour water.

Megarr said the CUC water division needs more supplies to take care of leaks in its distribution system and more storage tanks. ***(Kristi Eaton)***



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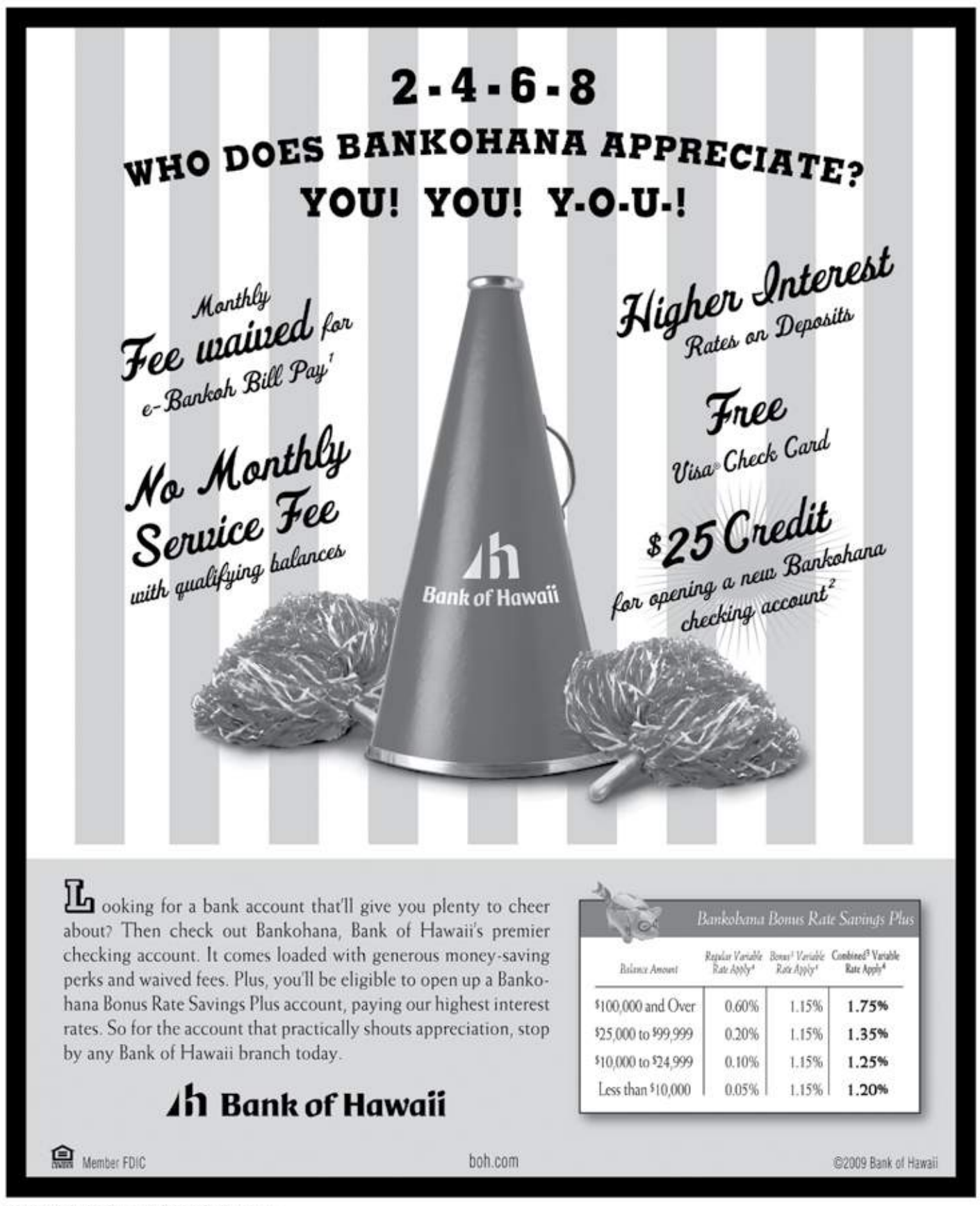
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On October 3, 2008, FDIC deposit insurance temporarily increased from $100,000 to $250,000 per depositor through December 31, 2009. FDIC

Crime Stoppers gets tips on Omisong's killers

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Police are confident that the killing of a Palauan man who was attacked possibly by two men in San Jose will be solved any time soon.

Acting police spokesman Jason Tarkong said yesterday that they have good leads on the suspects in the murder of Ligardo N. Omisong.

The NMI Crime Stoppers Program received tips about the suspects, said Tarkong, who is also coordinator for the Crime Stoppers Program.

Tarkong, however, stated that he can't release more information as detectives are still actively pursuing the leads.

He said the victim was also known as Ricardo Omisong.

Sources said Omisong used to hang out in Chalan Kanoa, then he moved to San Jose.

The victim, sources said, was known for asking money from passersby and poker and store customers in San Jose.

According to a police report, the 44-year-old Omisong was found lying on his back on the main road in front of Leo Poker in San Jose in the early morning of Feb. 27.

Omisong was taken to the Commonwealth Health Center where he was in a coma for six days. On March 5, the victim passed away.

A witness told responding police officers that he heard screams from outside his home and when he checked, he saw the victim lying unresponsive on the roadway.

The witness saw two men running north.

An autopsy confirmed that Omisong had been assaulted. Guam chief medical examiner Dr. Aurelio Espinola determined that based on the autopsy, the bruising on the left side of Omisong's face was consistent with a hard blow or punch.

Espinola also established that the injury on the back of Omisong's head was consistent with the victim falling on a hard surface.

Espinola concluded that the cause of death was subdural hematoma, with brain contusion.

COMPUTER TRAINEES

The Community Development Institute, a program of the Division of Community Programs & Services at the Northern Marianas College recently awarded 10 participants with certificates for completing CDI's Computer Literacy Courses. CDI offered these courses as part of an effort to increase the computer application skills of and job opportunities for community members. Also in photo are CDI Program Coordinator Les Ogumoro-Uludong (standing, far left) and Program Manager John Manalo (first row, second from the left).



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

OFF-ISLAND

From Page 1

further grow this fiscal year.

According to MRO, the slowdown in the economy forces people to cancel their private health insurance altogether and by the time many of them turn to the government for help, their medical condition has already gotten worse and will be needing referral to specialists in off-island facilities.

MRO, which is under the Department of Public Health, has agreements with at least 28 off-island health care providers, including 15 in Guam, five in Hawaii, three in the Philippines, three in the U.S. mainland, and two in Japan.

Budget

MRO is budgeted only $5,172 for FY 2009 for non-personnel costs such as airline tickets, even as it spent some $5 million in referrals for FY 2008 alone. Personnel costs total $512,037 for FY 2009.

Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez could not be reached for comment yesterday as to whether the department will be asking for additional non-personnel funding for MRO.

Rep. Ray Yumul, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, yesterday said no request for additional funding for the Medical Referral Office has been received from DPH.

Yumul also said that even if only a little over $5,000 is budgeted for MRO's non-personnel costs, the health secretary can always reprogram money from other programs to put into the medical referral expenses. He said the bulk of MRO's non-personnel expenses may fall under the Medicaid reimbursement amounting to over $4 million.

US

From Page 1

but the U.S. Customs and Border Protection encourages them to always carry a U.S. passport or any proof of citizenship when traveling.

Mike Balero, public affairs liaison officer at the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, yesterday said no passport will be required among U.S. citizens when traveling between Guam, the CNMI, Hawaii and the mainland, which is already the case.

Balero, however, said "there is the requirement that a traveler must establish that they are not otherwise inadmissible when they travel onward to another U.S. destination at the departure control point."

"For a U.S. citizen, the easiest way to do this is by establishing citizenship by providing a passport or other documents that show identity and citizenship," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

The Customs and Border Protection Web site also states that travelers from U.S. territories do not need to present a passport to enter the United States.

"U.S. citizens returning directly from a U.S. territory are not considered to have left the U.S. and do not need to present a passport. U.S. territories include the following: Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Swains Island and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. If the traveler also visited non-U.S. territories, he/she will be required to present a passport," it said.

Although U.S. citizens are not required to present a passport upon departure from the U.S. territories, travelers are encouraged to travel with a passport or other proof of citizenship, as they will be asked questions about citizenship and any goods they will be bringing to the U.S. mainland upon their departure from U.S. territories.

When the federal government takes over local immigration, tourists from 12 countries exempted from the U.S. visa requirement and accepted into the CNMI under the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program would not be allowed past the departure control point when traveling to the continental United States, Hawaii or other U.S. territories.

The countries whose citizens are included in the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program are Australia, Brunei, Japan, Malaysia, Nauru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, United Kingdom and Hong Kong.

The CNMI has been asking the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to add China and Russia to the list of countries exempt from the U.S. visa requirement, citing the significant economic contributions of these tourists to the islands.

For additional information about travel document requirements, visit the U.S. Customs and Border Protection website, www.cbp.gov.

NMI

From Page 1

eral musical experts from the region joined the festivities.

Last Monday, the 44-member Manta Ray Band flew back to the island with eight major awards from the contest: four gold, three silver, and a bronze. DoReMi, meantime, posted a gold medal for its lone performer, Zhen Yu Su, who played the violin.

SSHS' music conductor and director Will DeWitt said yesterday he is delighted with the overall performance of the CNMI groups.

The five gold awards earned by the CNMI included the following categories and divisions: concert band, rock band, string quartet ensemble, instrument solo performance for cello, and solo violin performance. Except for the violin performance, all awardees are members of the SSHS Manta Ray Band.

Haelin Kim, the cello gold medalist, is also a member of the Manta string ensemble that won the gold award for its division and which was voted as overall top festival performer by the jurors, deserving to receive the Tumon Fest's sweepstakes trophy for 2009.

Other members of the string ensemble included James Camacho, Minjung Song, and So Jung Song. They were accompanied by their director, Young Mi Han.

The Manta Flyerz' members who won in the rock band category were Min Seok Choi, Yoonseok Choi, Sangwoo Han, Chan Young Kang, and founder Joseph Jang.

The silver medalists in the solo performances were Anthony Gomez, trombone; Trini MacDuff, flute; and Junyeop Han, saxophone.

Meantime, the bronze medal was awarded to Krysthian Villanueva for his saxophone solo performance.

Command performance

DeWitt shared that during the event's final show of champions, the Command Performance, it was evident that SSHS students ruled the moment.

"I can say that we dominated the competition…and we ruled in the final show. Almost virtually the entire command performance concert was given by the SSHS. We are very proud of that moment!" he said.

DeWitt vows to have more amazing demonstrations and performances from the Manta Ray Band next year.

"I was never in doubt about the fact that our students will perform well. We're very proud because we were able to win the sweepstakes trophy back to SSHS," he added.

The festival's sweepstakes trophy can only go to whoever gets the highest rating, whether it is a band, choir, rock or solo.

DeWitt described the award as "superior" to any performance at the festival.

Last year, the SSHS Manta concert band was also named recipient of the prestigious honor.

EX-CTC

From Page 1

like his own private piggy bank, taking out money whenever he felt like it," said associate judge David A. Wiseman.

Wiseman believes that corruption in any form greatly harms a society or community, especially in the form of a breach of public trust that is vested in an employee or, as in this case, a ranking official working for the government.

The judge said corruption undermines faith in public institutions, and takes away valuable resources aimed at improving the quality of life of citizens.

"Such conduct can not and will not be tolerated and the proverbial message must be sent that government officials who betray the public trust by violating the laws of the CNMI will go to jail for a substantial term," said Wiseman in a written order issued yesterday.

For four counts of theft, Wiseman sentenced the 53-year-old Fitzgerald to a total of five years in jail, two years of which shall be served without parole.

For another count of theft, the judge sentenced the defendant to three years in prison, all suspended.

Fitzgerald was ordered to start serving his sentence at the Department of Corrections on April 15, 2009, at 8am. He is to be released on April 14, 2014, at 8am.

Wiseman required the defendant to pay the full $88,202.92 restitution to the CNMI plus a $100 assessment fee and probation fee.

Upon release from prison, Fitzgerald will be placed on supervised probation and required to write a letter of apology to CNMI citizens.

The letter, the judge said, should be published in the "Letters to the Editor" section of two local newspapers.

Wiseman permanently barred the former CTC chairman from re-employment with the CNMI government.

The Attorney General's Office charged Fitzgerald with 28 counts of theft and one count of misconduct in public office. The defendant signed a plea agreement with the government, pleading guilty to five counts of theft in November 2008.

During the sentencing hearing at the Tinian Superior Court on Friday, assistant attorney general Joseph Przyuski appeared for the government, while Fitzgerald came with his counsel, Joey P. San Nicolas.

"Public confidence demands a stance be taken against corrupt public officials such as Mr. Fitzgerald," according to Przyuski of the AGO's White Collar Crime/Government Corruption Task Force.

Przyuski recommended a 10-year sentence, all suspended except for five years, to be served without parole.

The Office of Adult Probation recommended a sentence of 25 years, all suspended except for 15 years to serve.

San Nicolas asked the court to impose a two-year sentence, all suspended except for six months.

In his order, Wiseman noted Fitzgerald's acceptance of responsibility for his actions by making a remorseful statement to the court. He cited a petition allegedly signed by 200 CNMI citizens requesting the court's leniency. The judge also noted that Fitzgerald has no prior criminal history.

Wiseman said as then chairperson of CTC, Fitzgerald who owed a fiduciary duty to the CNMI government and its people, stole $88,202.92 of public money.

He said Fitzgerald wrote 28 checks drawn from CTC bank accounts to his own name, endorsing those checks, and depositing the money in one of his three personal bank accounts. These activities spanned a period of seven months, a time during which Fitzgerald was entrusted with sole possession of CTC's checks and oversight of CTC's financial matters.

"Some of the funds were even used to purchase an airline ticket for his wife to go with him on a trip to the states," Wiseman pointed out.

"The court believes that this is a case where the best interests of justice and of this society will be best served by imposing a jail term that the court believes will have a deterrent effect on the life of the defendant upon his release and more importantly, on government employees in general and, along with the other terms of sentence, will provide the necessary retribution that society demands," he added.

AS PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ENDS

'Don't include Chinese, Russians; don't delay federalization'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

While most of the 42 entities commenting on the federalization interim rule want a 180-day delay in the start of the transition and the inclusion of Chinese and Russian tourists in the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program, there are a few who either support a June 1 implementation or give a different take on issues.

One of them, ordinary citizen Jack Shafer, opposes including China and Russia in the federal visa waiver program because these countries do not grant visa waiver rights to U.S. citizens.

"Any visa waiver program that the U.S. would implement now or in the future should be based on the idea of reciprocity. Currently, U.S. citizens must pay an excessive amount of money to apply for a visa to visit either Russia or China," said Shafer.

March 17 (March 18 Saipan time) is the deadline for submitting comments on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's interim final rule establishing U.S. ports of entry in the CNMI and establishing a Guam-CNMI visa waiver program.

Besides Taotao Tano Association Inc. whose support of the June 1 start of the transition period was already reported earlier, teacher Ronnie Hodges said that, if Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and the Saipan Chamber of Commerce were to prevail in court to delay federalization by 180 days, "will the CNMI still be allowed to enslave workers, not pay them, force them into the sex trade industry, force abortions, continue to receive U.S. aid, continue to be tax free, continue to fund Jack Abramoff's replacements while our schools are underfunded…?"

He also asked whether the CNMI will still be allowed to "use the CNMI for 'ice' transshipments, allow illegal U.S. entry, continue to be a haven for organized crime and criminals from Asia, continue work for foreign guest workers without status, continue to legislate bias and racist policies, continue to restrict freedoms of speech, press, and assembly of both American and guest workers alike."

Pastor Reid Ellis of Tinian said the DHS regulation has no sympathy to the people of the Commonwealth, especially on the people of Tinian who rely on the China tourism market.

"I am totally against the regulations as they are presently written. The visa waiver program must include China, the Philippines and Russia and be implemented with the input of the local Chamorro and Carolinian population from all three islands, not just Saipan," said Reid, who has lived on Tinian for 17 years.

Most commenters want a delay in federalization until additional security measures are in place and resources are identified to effectively implement a federal immigration system in the CNMI.

Admin still determining impact of $156M budget on govt personnel

'By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Office of Management and the State Administering Agency are still determining how many people work for the government and what the next step is now that the $156.76 million Fiscal Year 2009 budget is in place, according to press secretary Charles Reyes.

The budget, which includes $148 million from local collections, became law last week after the House of Representatives overrode Gov. Benigno Fitial's veto. The Senate had earlier overridden the veto.

After the law was passed, Fitial said the administration immediately began looking into the ramifications of the new budget. Thousands of government employees could possibly be let go or the government could be forced to shut down as early as July, Finance Secretary Eloy Inos said last week.

At a press conference last Thursday, Fitial said he was instructing mayors to calculate how many personnel they have.

The new budget allows for more than 4,000 full time employees. When asked for an estimate of how many employees could be laid off, Inos said he did not want to calculate numbers.

"I'd really hate to go that route. To go through the exercise to do that because it will be a very painful exercise and the consequence is going to be very detrimental," he said. "I was hoping I would not need to go through that route, but with the situation the way it is, that should be the start of the planning process."

Inos did agree, however, that the number is "probably" in the thousands.

Civil service employees cannot be terminated.

The Legislature put the administration in a very difficult situation, Fitial said.

"And the reason why it is going to be very difficult is because the Legislature chose to not work together with the administration, and this thing has got to stop because we are working for the people."

It's all political, he said, adding that because he is running for re-election, members of the Legislature did not think he would make touch decisions.

"That's wrong because I'm committed to do what is right," he said.

The administration is pushing the Legislature to pass austerity measures, saying without them the government will fall deeper into a deficit. The government overspent by $4.5 million for the first quarter of the fiscal year, and is on track to overspend the same amount by the end of this quarter, which ends at the end of the month, Inos said.

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MBA rules Academic Challenge Bee

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Marianas Baptist Academy was adjudged this year's champion in the 7th Annual Academic Challenge Bee organized by the National Honor Society's Saipan Southern High School chapter.

Middle school students Se Young Hwang, Suk Koo Kim, Young Eun Lee, Hye Young Oh, and Kanata Omori emerged the top performers, besting teams from other private and public middle schools.

The event was held earlier this month at the Saipan Southern High School campus cafeteria and drew 45 participants and nearly a hundred spectators and supporters.

Se Young Hwang said the honor was unexpected. "We're so happy because we didn't expect it. But I guess our preparations helped us a lot," she said.

Hwang, an 8th grader, is also an active participant in various academic contests such as the National Junior Forensic League, Mathcounts, and Spelling Bee.

Just last Saturday, she emerged champion in the Scripps Spelling Bee in Guam and will represent the region in the national contest in May. Hwang also recently finished top sixth in the 15th Annual State Mathcounts competition.

Hye Young Oh, a member of the winning team, was satisfied with their performance in the Academic Bee. "That was my first time in the Academic Bee and it was a great experience," she said yesterday. "It was really fun."

Like Hwang, Oh is also a consistent honor student and active participant in the NJFL, Mathcounts, and other school activities. She finished Top 4 in the State Mathcounts competition on March 7.

Last year's champion, Hopwood Junior High School, finished runner-up to MBA this time. Hopwood's students were John Paul Aglubat, Marjorie Ann Cuerdo, Emelyn Feria, Ezra Lizama, and Jessie Santos.

Named third best team was Saipan Community School composed of Sabina Calvo, Brian Cho, Eron Constante, Mikey Johnson, and Jimin Rye.

There were nine school teams in this year's competition: Chacha Oceanview, Hopwood, MBA, Rota Junior High, Saipan International School, Grace Christian Academy, Ladera International School, Mount Carmel School, and Saipan Community School.

Jesse Tudela, National Honor Society adviser for the SSHS chapter, expressed hope of getting the Tinian Junior High School to participate in the event next year.

Tinian chamber membership grows to 37

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

From only 19 members when it was revived last month, the Tinian Chamber of Commerce has grown to 37 members.

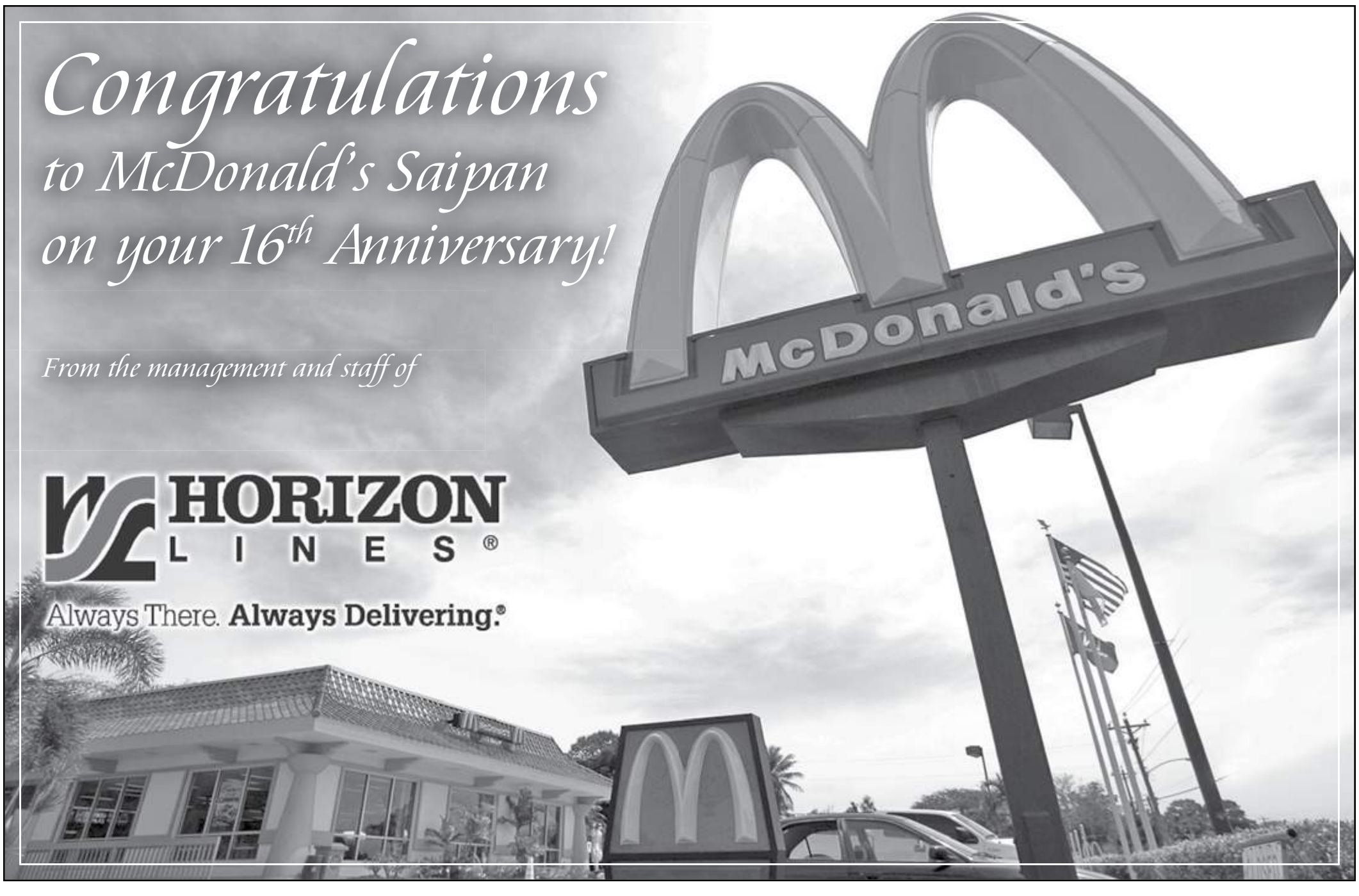
Phillip Mendiola-Long, president of the Tinian Chamber of Commerce, said about 50 people attended yesterday's general membership meeting, and the group welcomed an "additional 18 new members with a total membership now of 37 businesses."

Mendiola-Long, however, declined to comment on the military plans discussed by Maj. Gen. Eugene G. Payne Jr., the assistant deputy commandant for the U.S. Marine Corps' Installations and Facilities, who was the keynote speaker at the meeting.

The Joint Guam Program Office has yet to respond to *Saipan Tribune*'s inquiries.

Mendiola-Long said Payne discussed the "tentative" military plans for Tinian that are separate from the $15 billion Guam military buildup.

The Tinian Chamber of Commerce said it will be the voice of businesses on Tinian on issues such as the impact of a federal immigration system on the economy, the consequences of military activities, and capital improvement projects on the island.



Rota is declared StormReady and TsunamiReady

Rota has been recognized as the fourth western North Pacific location to become StormReady and TsunamiReady.

Rota joins Guam, Saipan, Tinian, and other StormReady communities in 50 states and 61 other TsunamiReady communities in 10 states, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the CNMI.

Rota Mayor Joseph S. Inos said this recognition "validates the value we place on education and preparedness, and our commitment to public safety. It further illustrates our experience in dealing with disasters, particularly typhoons."

"Rota has worked hard to earn the StormReady and TsunamiReady titles, making it the fourth location in the western North Pacific to do so," said Jeff LaDouce, director of the National Weather Service Pacific Region.

Rota officials were recently presented a recognition letter and special StormReady and TsunamiReady certificates at the Rota Resort and Country Club. The recognition must be renewed every three years.

Joining Rota residents at the ceremony were National Weather Service representatives from the Weather Forecast Office in Guam, Emergency Management representatives, and the National StormReady and TsunamiReady program manager from Silver Spring, Maryland, Chris Maier.

To be recognized as StormReady and TsunamiReady, a community must: Establish a 24-hour warning point and emergency operations center; create a system that monitors local weather and ocean conditions; develop multiple ways to receive tsunami and severe weather warnings, and alert the public in a timely manner; develop a formal hazard plan and conduct emergency exercises; and promote public readiness through community education. ***(PR)***

ON THE NET

NOAA: http://www.noaa.gov

PSS sets youth summit in May

The Public School System, through the office of Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan, will conduct a youth summit in May that will focus on three main areas: service and volunteerism, constructive projects, and youth mentoring.

This was disclosed yesterday by students' representative Francine Babauta, who said the event aims to reach out to more youths and students in the community.

Babauta said a youth advisory panel was created by Sablan who later formed an executive committee for summit.

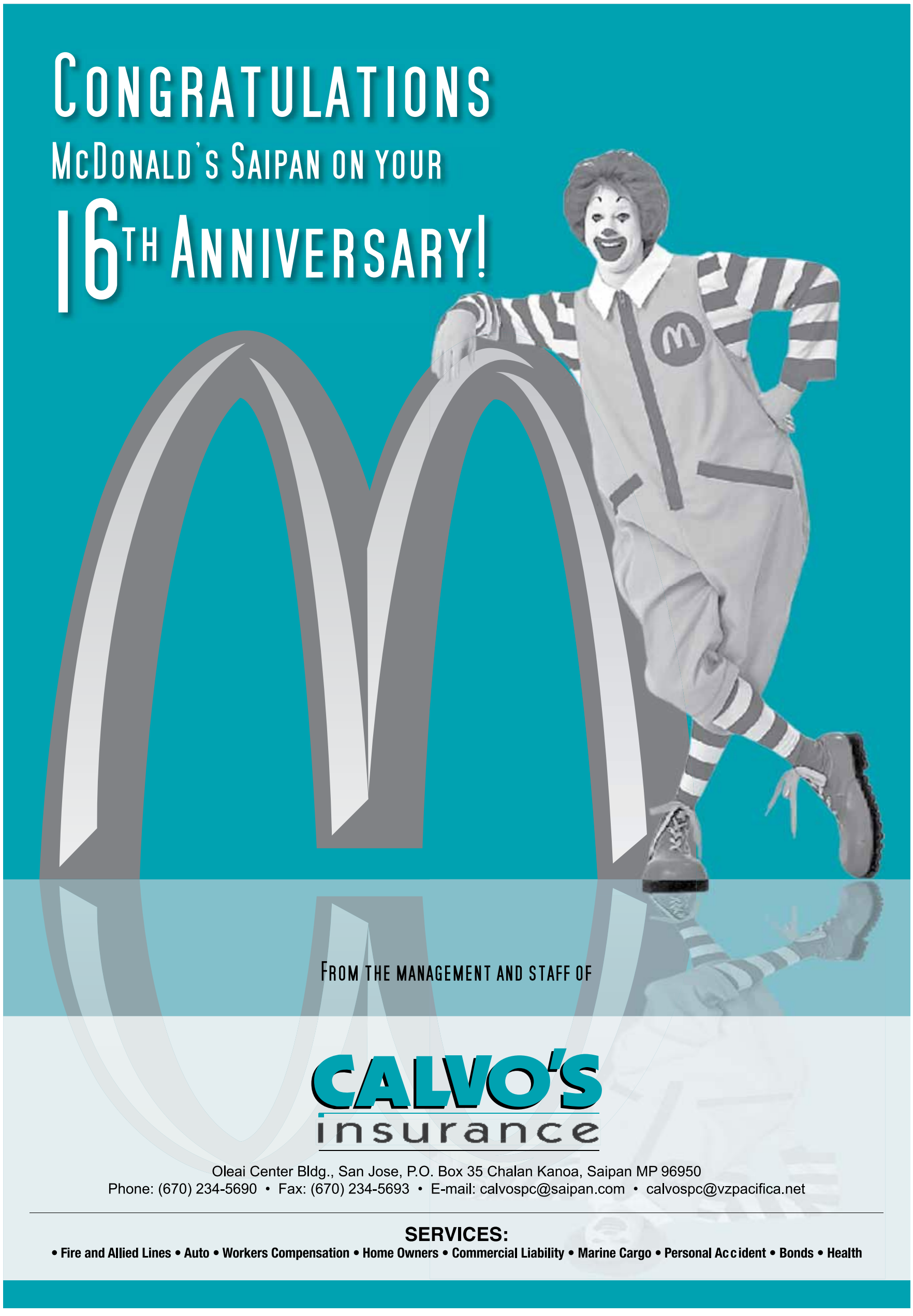
The committee, she said, is composed of all middle and high school STUCCO presidents, National Honor Society presidents, battalion commanders, and other youth leaders on campus.

From there, subcommittees were formed including the historical, project, and planning committees.

Babauta said the summit is slated in May and they are targeting to attract over 200 participants from schools and the community.

She said these subcommittees are meeting Thursday each week for the preparation and planning.

Babauta said mentoring will also be expanded to assist students who may find difficulty in meeting their credit requirements in school. ***(Moneth G. Deposa)***



Shell donates to kids' nonprofits

In an ongoing effort to support Saipan's nonprofit organizations, Shell Marianas donated 960 of its Limited Edition Collection of Ferrari Model cars to child-serving organizations dedicated to helping Saipan's children.

Head Start, Karidat, CHC Volunteers Association, and Connecting Families Inc. each received 240 Ferrari model cars from Shell to provide children with toys to play with at their homes or when they visit the establishments.

"This is just a small token of our appreciation for what these nonprofit organizations do every day to help the children of Saipan," said Eloy Lizama, president of Shell North Pacific Inc. "If one or two or 25 children get some joy out of the model cars, we're happy."

Representatives of the four nonprofit organizations expressed appreciation for the donation from Shell Marianas and discussed how they planned to use the toys to further serve their clients.

Angie Deleon Guerrero, director of Karidat, thanked Shell Marianas for the "early Christmas gift" that the Ferrari model cars represent.

"We will be using the toys for our Christmas distribution for Toys for Tots. We'll give some for birthdays of kids in the shelter throughout the year and the rest for Christmas Toys for Tots," Deleon Guerrero said.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Shell Marianas retail territory manager Jeff Boyer, standing left, presents the Ferrari model cars to CHC Volunteers Association members Rieko Guerrero, Anna Ludwick, Atong Gab Du, Head Start director Keiko Yamagata, CHCVA member Irene Gabbie, (seated left) CHCVA member Guadalupe Sabino, Connecting Families, Inc. program director Neda Camacho, CHCVA volunteer Sylvia Haywood, CHCVA vice president Annie Benavente, and Karidat director Angie Deleon Guerrero at the Shell Marianas head office in Puerto Rico.

CHC Volunteers Association vice president Annie Benavente said, "As far as the distribution is concerned, we have to get together as a group and decide. Perhaps we'll distribute to our pediatrics ward. We'll also do some promotion as we still need to raise funds for other projects."

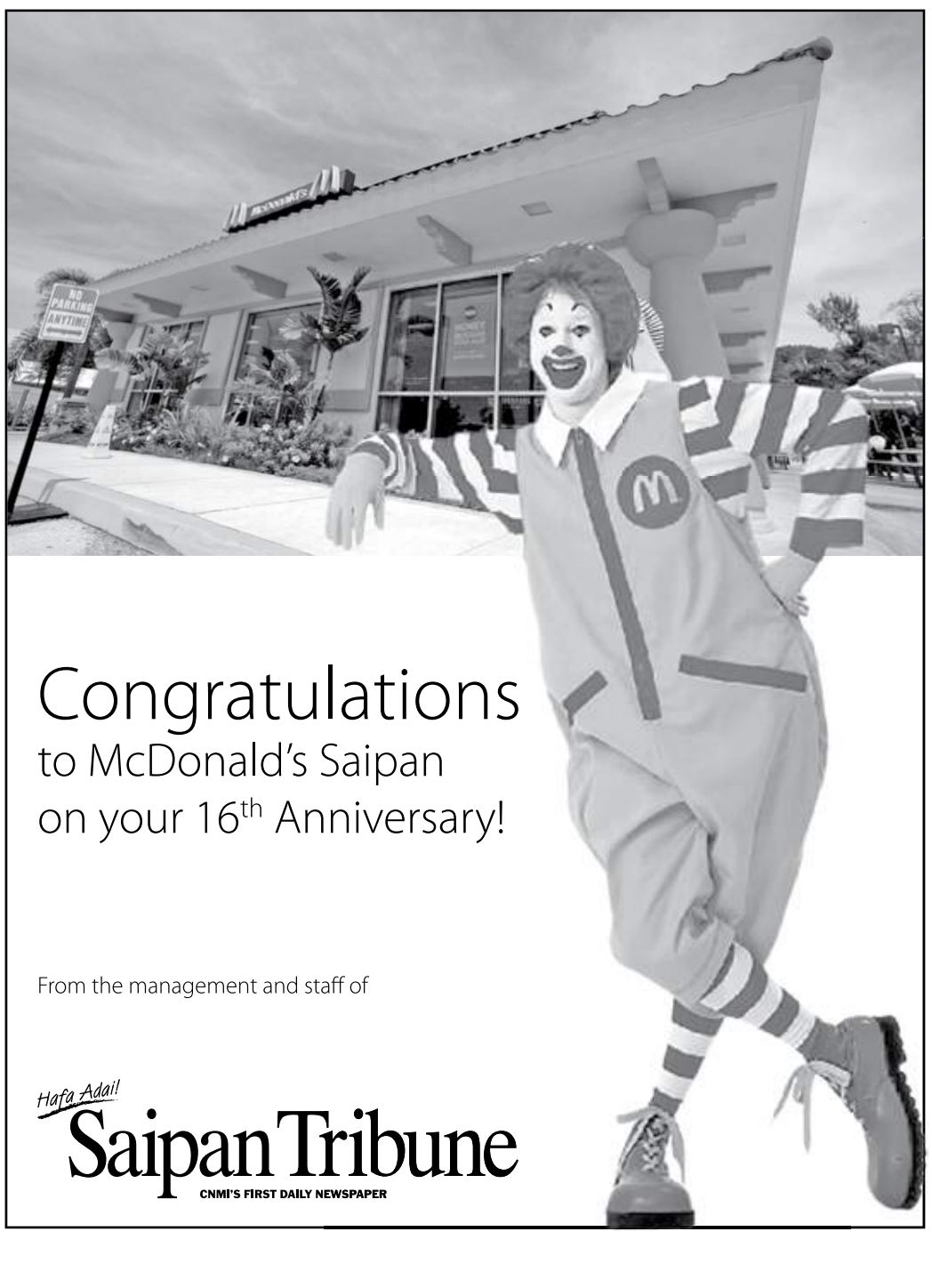
Neda Camacho, program director for Connecting Families, Inc. was "overwhelmed with Shell's generous donation." She added that the children at the center would love the toys.

Head start director Keiko Yamagata said the children served by the Head Start program would be very happy when they receive the toys.

The Limited Edition Collection of Ferrari Model Cars was an integral part of the Shell V-Power® Premium Gasoline campaign in 2008-2009. Resulting from Shell's partnership with Ferrari in Formula One, Shell V-Power is the most advanced fuel Shell has ever developed. It contains more than five times the minimum amount of cleaning agents required by federal government standards and twice the cleaning agents required by the "Top Tier" standard.

Shell customers can now enter to win a trip for two to the Formula One Grand Prix in Fuji, Japan, at stations on Saipan. With every $20 fuel purchase, customers receive an entry form for a chance to win. Other great prizes include round-trip tickets via Northwest Airlines to select Formula One Grand Prix locations including Malaysia, Singapore, Shanghai and Japan; Shell fuel totaling $1,000; and three $300 in auto-related bill payments for six months.

For more about Shell Saipan, visit www.shellguam.com/saipan. ***(PR)***



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CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 18, 1999

Budget comes down

With the island economy showing no signs of improvement, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio plans to reduce the appropriation level that will usher the new millennium, cutting back 2 percent to $206 million the proposed budget for FY 2000 from the current spending package. But some skeptics say anticipated revenues to be collected in the next fiscal year are unrealistic considering the expected decline in user fees the garment industry will pitch in to the local coffers. According to garment representatives, the slowdown in production could go beyond initial estimate of 25 percent because of the sharp drop in orders from US buyers worried over the $1 billion class action lawsuit.

McPhetres offers to step aside

Amid mounting calls for her resignation because of allegations of mismanagement of the Northern Marianas College, Agnes McPhetres has informed faculty members that she is retiring as president of the island's only higher learning institution in December. The news of her retirement came as a surprise to the college even if she had expressed her intentions to retire to members of the Board of Regents late last year. Sources from NMC who spoke on condition of anonymity said McPhetres informed the faculty Tuesday that she wrote to the Board explaining her plans to step down as president, a position she has held since the inception of the college in 1981.

March 18, 2002

Hiring ban now on

Citing the need to safeguard national security, the CNMI's Department of Labor and Immigration has banned the hiring of new nonresident workers from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Chinese coming from China's Fujian Province. In a related development, the DOLI also said it will strictly enforce the deadline on the filing of applications for nonresidents' renewal of employment, saying the department would no longer accept those filed beyond the legally prescribed period. The two directives were contained in separate public notices issued by the department's acting secretary, Dr. Joaquin A. Tenorio. The hiring ban became effective last Friday.

February arrivals rebound

The CNMI tourism industry rebounded from the tragic events of 9-11 as tourist arrivals to the Commonwealth registered a 6.7-percent increase, from January's 38,699 total visitors to February's 41,280. But the continued increase in visitor arrivals to the CNMI remains below the total number of tourists that the Commonwealth played host to in February 2001, which totaled 44,178 or 6.56 percent more than last month's. Total visitors for February 2002 slid slightly by 6.56 percent due to decline in the number of Japanese tourists who visited the CNMI last month compared to the same period last year.

March 18, 2003

BoS elects new board officers

The Bank of Saipan has elected a new set of directors, bringing back to order what bank receiver Antonio Muna described as a formerly "chaotic" board. Ten board seats were filled Saturday in an election among the bank's majority shareholders, Muna said. Muna is ex officio member, pursuant to a court order that approved the bank's rehabilitation plan. The receiver exercises veto power over the board's decisions. Elected board chairman was Paul Calvo, the receiver said. Save Our Savings depositors' group representative Anthony Pellegrino was installed board secretary. "Everything was reconstituted," Muna said. "The reason for this reconstitution is that the board was in disarray."

Chamber opposes higher taxes, asks NMI govt to 'tighten belt'

The CNMI's largest business organization is urging the local government not to rush into more tax increases, but instead to look at ways the government "can tighten its belt and increase efficiency." In a 12-page letter addressed to Gov. Juan N. Babauta released to the media on Friday, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce outlined its position on the Administration's Integrated Fiscal Plan. "The downturn in our economy over the past 5 years is an unfortunate reality, and must eventually be dealt with through a sustained reduction in government spending in proportion to the economic decline," said Chamber President Jay B. Jones. "With the threat of a potential war in Iraq, the possibility exists that both tourism and apparel sales could greatly decline in the near future. The local government must similarly be prepared for reduced revenue," said Jones.

Man arrested for allegedly beating up wife

Police arrested a 51-year-old man for allegedly beating up his wife after she refused to have sex with him at their residence in Upper Miha last Friday.

Jesus Riak Jones was apprehended after a police officer spotted him hiding behind banana trees near his house that same day.

Jones was detained for assault and battery, assault with a dangerous weapon, and disturbing the peace.

Department of Public Safety acting spokesman Jason Tarkong said yesterday that the victim suffered bruises and slight swelling on the left cheek.

Tarkong said that, according to the wife, she and their children were sleeping in the bedroom when Jones arrived and woke up the children, telling them to sleep in the living room.

When the wife refused to have sex because she was not in the mood, the defendant allegedly got angry and grabbed her foot and twisted it.

During the struggle, Jones allegedly punched his wife in the face and threw a fan at her.

Jones grabbed a machete and threatened his wife with it. As the children were looking, the defendant put down the machete and punched the closet doors.

Police were called, prompting Jones to run away.

As a police officer was interviewing the victim, the neighbors' dogs started barking.

The officer then saw Jones hiding behind some banana trees, according to Tarkong.

In other police's news, a man and a male juvenile allegedly assaulted some teenage members of a basketball team at a party in one of the rooms at Aquarius Hotel in Chalan Kanoa early Saturday morning.

Tarkong said the suspects have already been identified but have not been arrested yet.

One victim was taken to the Commonwealth Health Center for a black eye and bruising to the face.

Tarkong said preliminary investigation showed that one suspect walked into the room during the party and started slapping everyone.

The fight happened when one teenager tried to defend himself. As the teenager's cousin tried to stop the fight, the other suspect punched him several times.

The cousins ran away, but the two suspects caught them by the elevator door where they beat them up again. When the elevator opened, the victims managed to escape. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Pre-economic summit sessions set

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is reminding the public of the upcoming Economic Restoration Summit, set for April 2-3, 2009. In preparation for the Summit, two meetings will be held this month to gather preliminary information and ideas from the private and public sectors.

The first session will focus on private sector stakeholders and is scheduled to take place tomorrow, March 19, 2009, at the Multi-Purpose Center from 8:30am to 1pm. The second session will be for government officials on March 26, 2009, Thursday, at the same location from 8:30am to 12pm. Both sessions will be broadcast through video teleconference to Rota and Tinian participants. ***(PR)***

KagES sets cultural day fest

The Kagman Elementary School will be hosting its 9th Annual Cultural Day Festivities on March 28, 2009, Saturday, at the campus grounds, from 8:30am to 3pm. Everyone is welcome to attend; bring the whole family. ***(PR)***

Marianas High School schedule

Mar. 19: Smart Start Seminar for MHS Seniors, 8am-3pm at Saipan World Resort

Mar. 24: No classes (Commonwealth Covenant Day)

For questions and concerns, contact 237-3206. ***(PR)***

Saipan World Resort offers Spring Break Camp Quest

Saipan World Resort will be hosting several camp programs this spring break for children and teens.

Called "Spring Break Camp Quest 2009," the camp consists of four sessions from March 23 to April 17 (Monday to Friday). It is open to boys and girls ages 5 to 12 years old and 12 to 15 years old for Junior Lifeguarding.

Camp programs include Water Park activities, trips to the Saipan Zoo, tennis lessons, swimming lessons, marine life lessons from CRMO, lifeguarding lessons, first aid lessons, field games, water games, and a scavenger hunt every end of the session.

Camp hours is from 8:30am for drop off until 4:30pm, for pick up.

Camp fees (including lunch & snacks)

- $100/week for locals and non spaness members
- $25/day for locals and non spaness members
- $90/week for SWR spaness members & SWR employees
- $20/day for SWR spaness members & SWR employees

Registrations starts now. For details, call Saipan World Resort's Sports & Recreation Department at 234-5900 Ext nos. 350/352/358. ***(PR)***

Tinian waters get green flag

The Division of Environmental Quality assigned a green flag to beaches on Tinian after an analysis of samples collected from the island's beaches and storm drainages this week showed no excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria that exceed the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards.

The division analyzed samples of marine recreational and storm drainage water from nine locations on Tinian this week as part of the regularly scheduled sampling. Marine Water Reports are also provided at www.deq.gov.mp/section.aspx?secID=4 and http://www.cnmicoralreef.net/wq/beachcloseweeklyresults.htm. Interested individuals and organizations can also receive email notifications of the weekly marine water quality reports. To do so, send an email to environment@deq.gov.mp.

For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

Asan Beach site assessment

Park Officials at the War in the Pacific National Historical Park in Guam said that from March 23 to 29, 2009, the USA Environmental, Inc., working in association with Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific, will be conducting a site assessment of the reef flat area of the Asan Beach Unit.

Contractors will be on site with vehicles and personal watercraft as a safety measure along the Asan beach. Park Officials advise the public to maintain a safe distance from contractors and their equipment to ensure the assessment is completed in a safe and timely manner.

The public is further advised that vehicles are not allowed beyond the parking areas and that the use of personal watercraft is prohibited in coastal areas within park boundaries. ***(PR)***

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Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETA Guam	ETD Guam	ETA Saipan	ETA Yap	ETA Koror	ETA GenSan	ETA Davao	ETA Cebu	ETA Hongkong	ETA Kaoshiung	ETA Busan	ETA Yokohama	ETA Manila	ETA Singapore
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Opinion

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Lynn A. Knight PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

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EDITORIAL

Burma's bullies

The cruelest dictatorships, like the most ruthless criminal gangs, always have understood that the most effective way to deter opposition is to go after the innocent loved ones of potential enemies. Thus it was not enough for Gen. Than Shwe and his junta in the Southeast Asian nation of Burma (also known as Myanmar) to sentence the Buddhist monk U Gambira to prison for 68 years last fall. It was learned last week that his brother, his brother-in-law and four cousins have been sentenced to five years in Burma's gloomy prisons. We hope that this small piece of data is fed into the review of U.S. policy on Burma that Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has promised.

U Gambira, 28 at the time, was a leader of the nonviolent protests that broke out in Burma in September 2007. Thousands of Burmese followed him and other monks in peaceful protest against one of the world's most brutal dictatorships, despite understanding the possible consequences. U Gambira himself, in an op-ed published in The Post on Nov. 4, 2007—the day, as it happened, of his arrest after weeks on the run—said that he understood the risks he was taking. "It matters little if my life or the lives of colleagues should be sacrificed on this journey," he wrote. "Others will fill our sandals, and more will join and follow." We can only guess whether he understood that even his uninvolved relatives would be victimized.

The United States has been frustrated in its efforts to promote democratization in Burma, a nation of about 50 million, so Ms. Clinton's policy review is well timed. No doubt her team will talk to academics and humanitarian aid workers who favor more engagement with the regime and the country. (Those who tout Burma's recent cooperation with relief agencies might, however, want to take note of another prison sentence handed down last week: 17 years to Min Thein Tun, who was arrested last July for distributing relief supplies to the victims of Cyclone Nargis in the Irrawaddy delta.) They should talk with officials in neighboring countries, who have been pursuing a policy of engagement for years; in addition to its impact on the wealth of the regime and its trading partners in countries such as Thailand and Singapore, U.S. officials might ask, what effect has this policy had?

It may be that the U.S. review can lead to smarter and more targeted sanctions, with better coordination among allies and neighbors. Certainly, we hope that Ms. Clinton will make clear to Burma's government that the United States could never ease sanctions without first conducting full and free consultations with Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma's rightful ruler. Aung San Suu Kyi's party overwhelmingly won an election in 1990, but the junta ignored the results and has kept her isolated and under house arrest for most of the time since. Her release, and that of thousands of other political prisoners—and their families—remains essential.

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The Law of Obligation

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

The Law of Obligation
say's "There Ain't None!" that's a fact
So don't go thinking somehow
you'll dictate how people act

If all would do their 'duty'
and would simply do what's 'right'
Sure, things would go much smoother
there'd be one less war to fight

It would be nice I'll grant you
and yeah, that's all well and good…. but
No binding code of conduct
makes the world do what they 'should'

No one will do a thing now
just because you want them to
For everyone's got issues
and a different point of view

You can't control the masses
so here's what I suggest to you
Just live your life with honor
still despite what others do

And though you can't determine
what reward your action brings
There is a thing called justice
in the grander scheme of things

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT

Creating economic success for the CNMI



By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

One of the most liberating realizations I've had in my years of personal growth is accepting the truth that people will not always act and react in the ways I wish them to. In other words, the world is under no obligation.

Ah, yes! This may be a tough lesson to learn, but people really aren't obligated by *your* sense of right and wrong, to do what *you* want them to, just because you think it should be so, or because you've done something and expect something in return.

We all live in a society in which we hope the accepted standards of conduct will be adhered to by everyone. We hope people will say "please" and "thank you." We hope others will take our concerns seriously, hold up their end of a bargain, return our calls on time, pay back what they owe, allow us to merge into traffic, hold the door open for us, treat us as we treat them and so on. Yes, in our daily interactions with others, we hope people will play along with our game plan. The truth is, however, these are just expectations of what others should do.

And remember what we know about expectations? Unhappiness is nothing but an unmet expectation. Think about that. The only reason anyone on this planet is unhappy is because they had an expectation of how things should be that was not met.

Can you accept that others will do as they please? Can you still keep smiling when you don't get your way? Can you give up the victim game and stop waiting for someone to treat you in a specific way? If you can, you might find life's road a little less bumpy and less aggravating. At the very least, you'll spend less time wallowing in self-pity. Now that doesn't mean you'll accept abuse. Neither will you allow yourself to be taken advantage of. And you'll remove yourself from destructive people and situations as soon as possible. And for heaven's sake, don't lower your expectations of people. However, if you simply detach yourself from any specific outcome based on your worldview, you might be surprised how liberating it might be!

Keep doing what you know to be right, and know that all will be balanced—if not from "him" or "her," but through another, and the Universe at large.

■ ■ ■

Note: Saipan-based fans and followers of *Chicken Feathers and Garlic Skin: Diary of a Chinese Garment Factory Girl on Saipan* may now find copies at Bookseller Bookstore in the Joeten Shopping Center in Susupe. Hurry, there's a limited supply! All others may visit www.saipanfactorygirl.com or amazon.com.

Note: Ever wanted to direct friends, family, tourists or strangers to a set of websites that say and depict good things about Saipan? Do what I do: send them to www.bestofsaipan.com! (Of course, I may be biased.)

Note: For more tips on overcoming your fears, acting on your ideas, changing the game, and creating a passion-centered lifestyle, visit www.passionprofit.com!

■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passionprofit.com.

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Meandering

By STEPHEN B. SMITH
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Stephen B. Smith is the Accreditation, Language Arts, and National Forensic League coordinator for the Public School System Central Office.



There are few things worse than being trapped. Caught in the net. Held captive by smiling but unsympathetic jailers for seemingly endless hours. But, occasionally, it actually turns out to be worth it. This was one of those times.

The flight was from Saipan to Nagoya—Nagoya airport in itself is a trial—to Detroit city to Orlando. Twenty-three hours learning to empathize with a canned tuna! The airplane's seats are too narrow, the atmosphere held at 6 percent humidity—drink water, lots of water—at which level of atmospheric wetness medically defined dehydration is a distinct possibility. Thankfully the layovers in the airports were not tortuously lengthy.

Arriving in a city at an airport unknown to me, I asked around. Nobody ever heard of the place that I was headed for, let alone the event I was intending to attend. Finally, I ran into a lady who said that I could call direct, for free, to any hotel posted on the wall for free. I just had to pick up the phone. I chose a hotel at random. I called the La Quinta West. It was a fortuitous move: they had a shuttle and would be glad to pick me up. They did. I registered—room 212. It was a terrific choice. The room was good, free breakfast in the morning, free internet connection—I am writing this column in room 212, and I will be sending it in via the aforesaid Internet connection. And, above all the people were great, especially the desk clerks; they, unlike most of the people at the airport, knew everything.

For the next three days I was at the Convention Center attending various seminars on topics of truly vital interest to me. In a future column I may extrapolate at length on those; there were five of them.

At any rate, the La Quinta West did have one kinda major drawback: there were only two restaurants within walking distance, McDonald's on the one side and a small bistro call Fish on Fire on the other. The Mcdonald's opened at 5am, just for the record. Again, there was nothing else within walking distance but the two restaurants—I did not have a car.

I opted for Mac's early in the morning, i.e., fiveish. The free Continental breakfast was okay, but I'm a growing boy, and I need more! But at night it was Fish on Fire.

Now, one has to be there to really appreciate the ambiance of the F-on-F. That said, I will do my best to do it justice. Fish on Fire is called Fish on Fire for a reason that is too obvious to need explanation. But, knowing as I do the lethargy with which some folks read newspapers, I will give the reason anyway. Grilled seafood is their mainstay! Boy, is it ever. Fish, shrimp, crab, you name it, they had it and at rationally arrived at prices. I ate there every night I was in town.

The first three nights they also had small combos to entertain the guests—I did say it was a bistro after all. The first night it was bluegrass, I mean we're talking hardcore Southern music. I never liked bluegrass; I do now. The next night the music was what I shall refer to as crossover country. Crossover in the sense that the singer-guitarist did some pop renditions too. The gentleman could sing. Finally last night a lady named Wendy sang. Her partner in crime was a professor at the local college moonlighting as a singer guitarist. Their musical genre was pop. The two of them were sensational. The nightmarish 19 air hours, the unsympathetic, though efficient flight attendants, the incredibly inefficient Nagoya airport, none of it will ever make me forget the wonderful few days I stayed at the La Quinta West and dined at the Fish on Fire. Great time. Keep them in mind if at any time you find yourself headin' for Orlando.

A valuable lesson in math and self-reliance

By MARIA FRICA T. PANGELINAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Maria Frica T. Pangelinan is a senator in the 16th Northern Marianas Legislature and is chairwoman of the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee.



Now that the Legislature has overridden the veto of the budget bill for fiscal year 2009, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has stated that his administration has no choice but to reduce personnel.

The administration's logic is fascinating: If there is a budget, there will be inadequate funds and employees will have to be let go; however, if there is no budget, there will be plenty of funds and no employees will be terminated.

This is not magic. It is a simple case of planned deficit spending. The first quarter reports from the Governor's Office had the government on track to overspend by $18 million for Fiscal Year 2009.

This spending trend is astonishing, particularly since it comes from the very office that set the estimated revenue levels. In 2009 this number has been reset several times. More than any other government entity, the Governor's Office knows what the level of available resources is.

So why has the spending in excess of these levels continued? The governor used to say it's because there was no budget. Now he's basically saying it is *because* there is a budget.

Each time the estimated revenues have changed, the Legislature has worked together and provided legislation that has accommodated the new estimates.

One point in the public discussions that keeps coming up and causing confusion is the way estimated revenues are being reported. In the governor's original budget proposal, he included the use of Compact Impact and certain Outside General Fund resources to be utilized in addition to the General Fund revenues.

There were $5.1 million in Compact Impact funds and $3.5 million in Outside General Fund resources in addition to the General Fund resources. The budget that is now in place accounts for all three; $ 5.1 million plus $3.5 million plus $148 million equals $156.6 million. These figures all came from the Governor and this is the same framework that was used in the FY2007 budget and now the FY2009 budget.

The Legislature, albeit belatedly, has finally put in place a budget that contains controls on hiring. It also puts the expenditure authorities and department heads in the position they should be, responsible for bringing their personnel costs into line with the available funds.

There must be reductions in personnel costs. This has already occurred in the Legislative Branch. Math is math, whether you run a grocery store, a government, or are balancing your checkbook. If the money coming in is less than the money going out, there are problems.

This administration seems to be more inclined to support the local economy through direct government employment than in developing a private sector no longer addicted to artificially low minimum wage jobs filled by guest workers. We managed to sail through the garment factory era using that economic model, but it is not working now.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the average annual wage of an accountant in the United States is $57,060. Today in the CNMI there is advertised an accountant's position in the private sector at $18,000. Government employees with the title of accountant I - IV have a salary range from $17,701 to $42,558.

What is wrong with this picture is that the requirements for that private sector job include *"four years of college and work for several years in accounting to be considered qualified."* This level of expertise is not listed as a requirement even at the Accountant IV level for public service.

So, do we continue to desperately scramble to preserve the two-tiered system that crowds our government offices with personnel, and our private sector with guest workers? Do we keep fighting minimum wage increases? Do we continue to resist a "federalization" that can open up jobs for locals in the private sector?

I say no. It is time to stop wasting energy on a dysfunctional economic model and embrace a future that makes sense. The imbalance in the CNMI's wage system only contributes to its economic woes. The government cannot and should not engage in unjustified hiring in an effort to avoid facing political pressure from local businesses as they transition to a 21st century labor market.

For all of their posturing, private sector executives in the CNMI are well informed. They know the real value of the positions in their companies. Opposing increases in labor costs is part of being in business. However, in spite of the fact that the minimum wage increase in the US of 1996-1997 affected 10 percent of the working population, it did not create a discernable drop in employment opportunities.

All of this being said, right now each person and company in the CNMI is just trying to get by during this period of economic turmoil. There are challenges, but there are also some clear opportunities available to us all.

Self-reliance is probably the most valuable lesson to be learned here. I applaud the initiative taken by Saipan Southern High and their wind power project. Anthony Pellegrino's trade institute is another example. There are others, companies and individuals alike, who are using their talents to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families and communities.

There are more ways in which the government can economize. I hope to identify and target more of them during the upcoming FY 2010 budget review.

Transparency works…unlimited

By JIM RAYPHAND
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

To say that our government is plagued with questionable, unscrupulous practices is a cliché and for good reason, but one that is all too often and dismissively bestowed on politicians and government workers in general as if by mere association they are suddenly incapable of doing what's right. The conspiracy theories are endless, but for the most part they exist because of a handful of people in high-level, "connected" positions choosing to do what they know is wrong. Call it corruption, call it incompetence, or call it politics, but please do not presume that everyone in government is dirty. Of course, if the shoe fits then back up and leave your muddy zories out front—but there are plenty of good people in government working to clean up the mess with brand-new quicker-picker-upper mopheads, buckets full of degreasing agents and windshield wipers, so everyone can view the results of their labor.

There is growing talk about the younger generation of upstarts causing the tremor that is to be a cleaner, more open government. The fact is, age has nothing to do with the movement in that direction—there are just as many, if not more, young knuckleheads as there are old ones. *Since ever since*, numerous people in government have been beating their heads against the same guarded walls of territorialism and other hollow-blocks of self-inflated egos. The endeavor is not new, but if the younger generations are to make any significant headway in the quest for better governance, they will need to connect with and build on existing foundations from the inside out…herein lies part of the problem.

For some insiders, "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely"… not my words, but relevant in the cases of so many of our pseudo-big-shots who have in some fashion or another made their way to the tops of our public hiring pools and subsequently lost sight of the reasons for their being there in the first place. These are the guys with questionable qualifications and limited skills who surround themselves with yes-men and expect people to bow in honor of their greatness…the same ones who pit people's jobs against their constitutional rights or people's fiduciary duties against personal loyalty, and the same ones who have caused a kind of snowball effect in the general negative impressions of our government. You know the type… the ones who get offended if you call them by their names instead of their titles, but can't or won't answer even the simplest question about the work they supposedly do and leave you questioning, "How in hell did they get the kinds of jobs they have?" These same guys thrive on perpetuating a climate of fear and uncertainty that keeps even the boldest of bold individuals walking on eggshells as not to risk their jobs. But that's enough about *those guys*.

For what its worth, I'm writing to share some thoughts arising out of my involvement in various government boards, including the Council on Developmental Disabilities, the State Rehabilitation Council, and the Interagency Coordinating Council, to name a few. To be clear, I sit on these boards as a representative member for the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc., a non-profit organization also governed by a multi-member board of directors to which I report—not as a representative for myself.

The function of these boards is one of extreme importance in terms of accountability for both the programmatic and the fiscal management of their respective programs. Unfortunately these types of volunteer boards are not always effective in carrying their roles. For one thing, members often get tangled up in contrived, sometimes irrelevant nonsense (i.e., personality battles, contradicting agendas and cultural/personal loyalties) that we too lose sight of the primary purposes at hand. For another, members often don't know enough about the inner workings of government policies, fiscal management concepts or personnel matters that they blindly accept their directors' reports with no questions asked. This would be all well and good except that sometimes one of "*those guys*" gets in and, sadly, you just can't take them at their word. That being said, you simply are not upholding your fiduciary duty if because you trust someone you (1) do not scrutinize his work and (2) have ques-

See TRANSPARENCY on Page 13

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°

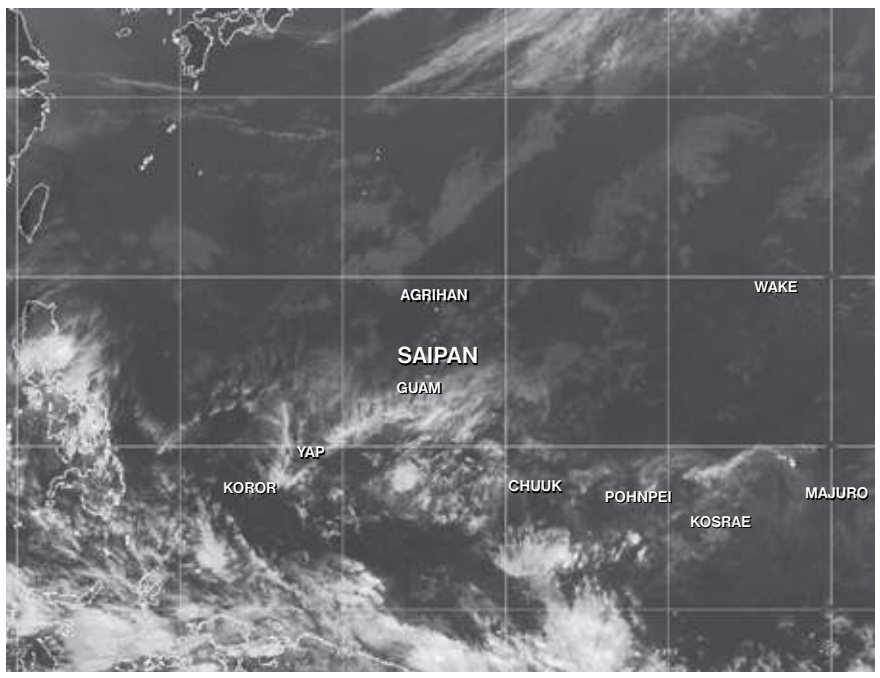
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Sunny	▲84	▼75
Palau	Cloudy	▲89	▼78
Yap	Cloudy	▲88	▼76
Chuuk	Rain	▲88	▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲88	▼75
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲90	▼76
Majuro	Showers	▲84	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲73	▼63
Beijing	Partly Sunny	▲81	▼50
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲79	▼68
Honolulu	Showers	▲74	▼68
London	Partly Sunny	▲57	▼36
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲77	▼56
Manila	Showers	▲88	▼75
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲73	▼59
Miami	Showers	▲79	▼67
New York	Partly Sunny	▲61	▼46
Osaka	Sunny	▲66	▼49
Paris	Partly Sunny	▲57	▼37
Pusan	Cloudy	▲66	▼51
Rome	Sunny	▲62	▼43
Salem	Rain	▲55	▼40
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲65	▼49
Seoul	Showers	▲57	▼46
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲66	▼50
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲67	▼45

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers between Yap and Chuuk within 100 miles of a line from 8N144E to 8N150E and east of Majuro within 75 miles of a line from 7N175E to 7N178E. A near-equatorial trough extends from 2N135E eastward to the equator at 155E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are well south of Palau and Yap or south of a line from 4N130E to 2N142E and well south of Chuuk within 100 miles of 3N152E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
1:52 AM Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
6:30 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
11:18 AM Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
7:26 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:23 AM	6:28 PM
Thursday	6:22 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:21 AM	6:28 PM
Saturday	6:21 AM	6:28 PM
Sunday	6:21 AM	6:28 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today		11:18 AM
Thursday	12:50 AM	12:09 PM
Friday	1:38 AM	1:01 PM
Saturday	2:24 AM	1:53 PM
Sunday	2:24 AM	1:53 PM

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  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 12, 2009

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota				
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7	
Saipan-Guam				
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily	
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily	
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota	
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6	
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily	
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily	
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily	
Saipan-Narita				
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am	Daily	
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7	
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily	
Guam-Narita				
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm	Daily	
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm	Daily	
Saipan-Osaka				
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am	1,4,6	
Guam-Osaka				
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm	Daily	
Saipan-Nagoya				
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am	Daily	
Guam-Nagoya				
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily	
Saipan-Incheon				
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1	
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7	
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am	1,4,6 via Osaka	
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily	
Saipan-Busan				
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am	1,4,5,7	
Saipan-Shanghai				
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6	
Rota-Guam				
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7	
Guam-Palau				
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm	1,7	
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm	3,5	
Palau-Manila				
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm	3,5	
Guam-Manila				
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror	
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily	
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7	
Nagoya-Manila				
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm	Daily	
Incheon-Hongkong				
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm	Daily	
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm	Daily	
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm	5,7	
Narita-Manila				
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm	Daily	

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:20am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 100	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Narita-Guam			
NW 74	9:45am	2:20pm	Daily
NW 82	10:30am	3:10pm	Daily
Osaka-Saipan			
OZ 120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7
Osaka-Guam			
NW 80	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	9:00pm	1:20am+1	Daily
Nagoya-Guam			
NW 24	10:00am	2:30pm	Daily
Incheon-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7 via Osaka
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3,4,6,7
Shanghai-Saipan			
FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6
Palau-Guam			
CO 954	2:30am	5:25am	1,2
CO 892	2:35am	5:30am	4,6
Manila-Palau			
CO 892	10:10pm	1:50am+1	3,5
Manila-Guam			
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Manila-Nagoya			
NW 72	6:30am	11:05am	Daily
Hongkong-Incheon			
OZ 724	12:30am	4:50am	Daily
OZ 7183	12:45am	5:05am	1,4,6
OZ 722	1:30pm	5:45pm	Daily
Manila-Narita			
NW 2	7:45am	12:40pm	Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

A personal identity-theft crisis



By PATT MORRISON
(c) 2009, Los Angeles Times

Morrison is a Los Angeles Times columnist and host of a daily public-affairs show on Los Angeles public radio. Morrison's e-mail address is patt.morrison@latimes.com.

Now it's my turn to be a statistic.

Not that kind. I'm still here and writing. So far, anyway. Let me check my inbox—nope, no pink slip.

So where was I? Oh, right. A statistic.

Add me to the thousands of victims of identity theft (313,982 reported last year, according to the Federal Trade Commission). Although, in my case, it's still potential identity theft, and I'm spending a lot of time and money to keep it that way.

Last week, someone drilled the lock out of my mailbox and stole what was inside: the usual magazines and fliers, and a financial statement.

Last year, I bought the locking box because of mail theft. Cops had stopped a truck loaded with stolen mail nearby. A thief swiped an unsolicited preprinted credit-card-with-checks envelope from a neighbor's box and went on a spending spree.

Now my mailbox is gaping open like Jerry Lewis' jaw. The irony is that I am pretty scrupulous about the personal numbers I flash around. I do no online banking—zero. My online shopping is confined to airline tickets, on a separate credit card. I pay cash for gas and everyday shopping. I was flabbergasted when a kid in front of me at Starbucks paid for his $1.45 tea with a debit card. That is just wrong.

Even the Bush White House didn't do as much shredding as I do.

So here all my precautions get undone by a thuggish break-and-enter mail theft. It has meant hours on the phone. I called the Postal Inspection Service, the CSI of the USPS, to report the break-in. "We've been getting so many reports about mail theft," one woman commiserated. I called my local post office to talk to the manager and to stop home mail delivery.

I called my credit card registry for one-call card cancellation. I called the credit union and the American Express credit-monitoring service I'd signed up for a while ago. I went to my bank. I called Social Security, but they don't take reports on these matters. Only in extreme cases can you change your Social Security number—like going into the federal witness-protection program.

Then, misery loving company, I wanted to see how my misery stacked up, so I called the guys who know.

Jonathan Fairtlough is assistant head deputy of the high-tech-crimes division at the Los Angeles County district attorney's office. Years ago, identity fraud wasn't taken too seriously. Now California has "some great laws," he tells me.

But we're our own worst enemies at protecting our credit. "People tend not to like security measures," Fairtlough explained. When a clerk asks to see ID with a credit card, for instance, we complain, and the stores stop asking. "Sometimes," he said, "our desire for convenience makes it easy for thieves to be able to steal from us." Ask me, ask me!

There are slicker means of identity theft than mailbox break-ins, Fairtlough said. Skimming devices slipped into debit and credit card pay points at gas stations, or even in bank ATMs, snag your account and PIN. The thieves make fake cards and clean you out.

At the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Sgt. Bob Berardi is part of the identity theft detail. He apologized if he was talking too much—"I'm Italian"—but he had a lot to say.

"It's very hard for most people to understand how devastating this can be. ... The psychological effect stays with you forever. Someone has burglarized you, taken something from you, forced themselves into your life, and you have no idea what that impact is going to be, today, tomorrow or down the road."Some matters are out of our control. Ask the poor clients of a mortgage broker in Southern California's Orange County whose files ended up sitting out in the open at a recycling center last month—Social Security numbers, tax returns and all.

But there are tips and ideas aplenty from law enforcement (check out the identity theft page at www.ftc.gov). Berardi suggests you use your ATM card as a credit, not debit, card. That keeps your PIN from thieves. Make sure your computer security software is up to date. Don't fall for scams; that e-mail that looks like it came from your bank probably didn't. Pretend you're Oliver North and shred everything.

Checking your credit is a wearisome task, but do it. I'll be doing it probably every week now—not for three months but for a year or more, because, as Fairtlough told me, thieves will wait until your vigilance slackens.

In the meantime, you business people and bureaucrats of the world, if someone purporting to be me tries to buy a Hummer, or if my name shows up on a passport in Peshawar—well, that is just so not me. Patt Morrison: Accept no substitutes.

Displacement of our people

Article XII of the NMI Constitution provides and limits landownership to NMI Descent. It also provides a troubling formula that displaces those with less than 25 percent indigenous blood from landownership. It is this very issue that our young folks have found very unsettling!

The latter provision (prohibition of landownership for those with less than 25 percent local blood) should have been deleted from the outset. It seems a discriminatory and ludicrous provision of local constitutional law. And it should have been reasonably foreseeable then and now that the dilution of ancestral blood is a natural phenomenon. Intermarriages have occurred here for more than four hundred years. Since 60 years ago mobility and educational opportunities have served as vehicles for more intermarriage.

It may be good to leave land in the hands of the indigenous people. But the blood quantum requirement shouldn't be the basis of landownership. The right thing to do is grant private landowners 100 percent ownership of their properties, pure and simple. And let's grant posterity with indigenous ancestry the same rights that we enjoy today. It should result in a win-win situation for one and all.

This provision depicts a protectionist mindset that denies our children (with indigenous ancestry) their rights. Yet, the same set of constitutional law grants foreigners adopted by local families the same rights. Shouldn't this provision of constitutional law be repealed in an effort to make landownership here for posterity an inclusive policy that nurtures harmony among the indigenous people? What's the basis of this provision other than its highly divisive nature? Doesn't this also violate the sanctity of procreation and the institution of marriage?

It is even more troubling how this provision displaces our very own as to render them dangling in no man's land. But weren't they endowed with the same cultural and traditional heritage since birth? Though our indigenous blood quantum may have been diluted, the fact remains that you and I must have come from somewhere. We had our humble beginnings in these isles and for once in our lifetime let there be responsible disposition of the rights of our young people to be full members of the Northern Marianas community.

As a people, our anchor is founded on our cultural and traditional heritage handed to us by our ancestors. Land is conveyed to siblings not necessarily for the sake of ownership, but for survival of last resort in the event we crash into the sea of debt or other abject hardship. I am ready to honor the will of our ancestors of inclusiveness. Are you?

John S. DelRosario Jr.
As Gonno, Saipan

TRANSPARENCY

From Page 11

tions, but you don't ask.

In the case of the Council on Developmental Disabilities, we find ourselves in the midst of a full-blown investigation into allegations that "there [was] misuse and abuse of federal funds in the programs under our care." What comes of it, time will tell and hopefully justice will prevail. The good news is that a majority of the Council members did not cower behind cultural or personal loyalties; rather, we united and took specific actions as a collective body to address the issue as best we could. Still, the question remains: Have we learned our lessons clearly enough to be able to prevent such things from ever happening again? The forecast is good, but the final answer remains to be seen and one thing is for sure, if we keep doing the same things over and over again, we will keep getting the same results over and over again.

Whether it's *in search of the rising tide*, a conviction to *stand strong*, or a new *blame game*, more and more people believe that transparency works…unlimited.

■■■

A quick note about NMPASI and the 15-plus year history behind it: We continue to build upon a foundation that is deeply rooted in the collective efforts of its founders and its earliest employees, all of whom refused to allow disparate treatment of individuals with disabilities. As for transparency and how it applies to us, we practice what preach…there are no juicy secrets or hidden agendas.

For more on programs for individuals with disabilities and about NMPASI, feel free to call us at (670) 235-7273/4 [voice], 235-7278 [tty], 235-7275 [fax] or check us out on-line at www.nmpasi.com.

Jime Rayphand is the executive director of the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc.



Business

Obama berates AIG and vows to try to block bonuses

WASHINGTON (AP)—Joining a wave of public anger, President Barack Obama blistered insurance giant AIG for "recklessness and greed" Monday and pledged to try to block it from handing its executives $165 million in bonuses after taking billions in federal bailout money. "How do they justify this outrage to the taxpayers who are keeping the company afloat?" Obama asked. "This isn't just a matter of dollars and cents. It's about our fundamental values."


Obama

Obama aggressively joined other officials in criticizing American International Group, the company that is fast becoming the poster boy for Americans' bailout blues. The bonuses could contribute to a backlash against Washington that would make it tougher for Obama to ask Congress for more bailout help—and jeopardize other parts of the recovery agenda that is dominating the start of his presidency. Thus, the president and his top aides were working hard to distance themselves from the insurer's conduct, to contain possible political damage and to try to bolster public confidence in his administration's handling of the broader economic rescue effort.

Obama had scheduled a speech Monday to announce new help for recession-pounded small businesses. But first, he said, he had a few words to say about AIG. He lost his voice at one point and ad-libbed, "Excuse me, I'm choked up with anger here." It was just a light aside, but he meant the sternness of his remarks to come through.

"This is a corporation that finds itself in financial distress due to recklessness and greed," Obama declared.

He said he had directed Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner to "pursue every legal avenue to block these bonuses and make the American taxpayer whole."

Later, White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said the administration would modify the terms of a pending $30 billion bailout installment for AIG to at least recoup the $165 million the bonuses represent. That wouldn't rescind the bonuses, just require AIG to account for them differently.

Obama tries to loosen credit for small businesses

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama freed billions of dollars to help the nation's small businesses on Monday, hoping to get credit flowing again to Main Street, not just Wall Street. He heaped praise on the little guys of American industry, often overshadowed in the blitz of government bailouts.

The centerpiece of Obama's latest plan will allow the government to spend up to $15 billion to buy the small-business loans that are now choking community banks and lenders. That, in turn, could allow those banks to start lending money again to small companies to invest, pay bills and stay afloat.

"You deserve a chance. America needs you to have a chance," Obama said in an appeal to all those who run small businesses or hope to one day.

Obama's effort was, at one level, fundamental to helping the economy rebound. Small businesses have created about 70 percent of the new jobs over the past decade, and as their credit lines have dried up, so has their ability to thrive or survive.

Dell hopes PCs can't be too rich or too thin

By JESSICA MINTZ
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

The way it came on the scene, it could have been a rare perfume or a designer handbag, undaunted by the roiling economy.

The first rumors of it surfaced in December on a lifestyle magazine's blog. A few weeks later, it was spotted in the arms of runway model Hollis Wakeema in a Las Vegas hotel.

Then came its Web site: Black and white fashion photos fade in and out as cool piano notes drop and melt into a warm, smooth beat. Prepare to fall in love, the site reads.

Now, go buy the laptop.

Specifically, Dell Inc.'s new $2,000-and-up laptop. The computer maker was entering the ultra-thin notebook race Tuesday with the Adamo, from the Latin for "to fall in love with."

The aluminum-body laptop comes in two colors, "onyx" and "pearl." It boasts a 13-inch screen and, with a depth of less than two-thirds of an inch, is thinner than both Apple Inc.'s 0.76-inch MacBook Air ($1,800 and up) and Hewlett-Packard Co.'s 0.7-inch Voodoo Envy notebook (from $1,900).

NOTICE
Tun Goru
SNACK BAR
will be closed on **March 19, 2009**
due to funeral service of
Verena Marie Tudela Cabrera
Thank You

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Alcoa unveils plan to cut dividend, slash costs

PITTSBURGH (AP)—For the first time in more than a quarter century, Alcoa Inc. is slashing its quarterly dividend as part of a plan to lower costs and bulk up its cash cushion amid the recession. In addition to the 82 percent dividend cut, the Pittsburgh-based aluminum maker said it expects to sell $1.1 billion worth of stock and debt and reduce annual costs by more than $2.4 billion by 2010. The announcement, made after the market closed Monday, follows news in January that Alcoa plans to lay off about 13 percent of its global work force by the end of 2009, further cut production and spending, and sell four of its subsidiaries. Alcoa has been hard-hit by the weakening world economy, and orders have plummeted for the lightweight metal used in everything from cars and aircraft to window frames and beer cans. Prices have tumbled as demand has dropped in key markets such as autos and construction.

If government gets way, Ruth Madoff gets nothing

NEW YORK (AP)—Prosecutors probing Bernard Madoff's massive fraud are determined to leave his wife with almost nothing after telling a Manhattan court that they consider more than $100 million in assets, most of it listed in her name, the fruits of her husband's crimes. The government even included a $39,000 Steinway piano and $65,000 in silverware, both owned by Ruth Madoff, in items it said it will try to force the Madoffs to forfeit. The list was in a three-page document filed in U.S. District Court late Sunday. Brenda Sharton, a lawyer with a Boston firm representing several burned investors, said the government's aggressive approach with Ruth Madoff isn't surprising. "I don't think it's unusual ... given the magnitude of the fraud," she said. "It would be unusual if they didn't go after whatever assets they can get."

Stocks give up gains after 4-day rally

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street's big rally fizzled—and maybe that's OK. Analysts said Monday's pullback after a four-session surge didn't necessarily signal that traders were reconsidering their newfound optimism about financial stocks, a main driver behind last week's advance. In fact some viewed the measured easing in stocks as reassuring following a surge of more than 9 percent in major indicators last week, more than the market has moved in some years. "This is healthy," said Dave Rovelli, managing director of trading at brokerage Canaccord Adams in New York. "The best thing for this market is that we don't go up aggressively. A steady rise of a few up days then a down day would be a lot better than 1,000 points up." Stocks rose for much of the session as investors snapped up hard-hit financial shares.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

For a 40-TON AIR-CONDITIONING UNIT
Baggage Claim Area at the Arrival Building
of the Saipan International Airport

The Commonwealth Ports Authority is soliciting sealed proposals from qualified companies to procure and install a 40-Ton Air-Conditioning Unit at the Baggage Claim Area of the Arrival Terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

Proposals should include procurement, installation and testing of the new unit as well as 1-year warranty, 1-year preventive maintenance services and 24-hour on-call services for all warranty items.

A walk through inspection will be conducted on **Wednesday, March 18, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.** in order to assess the area and determine equipment and materials needed for the installation. Attendance at this walkthrough is mandatory for any companies interested in submitting proposals. Prospective proposers will meet CPA staff at the Ports Police Central Office prior to the inspection to acquire security badges.

Inquiries regarding this Request for Proposals may be delivered to the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, at the Saipan International Airport, faxed to (670) 234-5962 or emailed to cpa.admin@pticom.com.

All proposals are to be submitted in a sealed envelope marked with the respective RFP description to the office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, 2nd floor of the Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, no later than **4:30 p.m., Friday, March 27, 2009.**

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in the proposals if determined by the Ports Authority to be in its best interest. All proposals shall become the property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

/s/ EFRAIN F. CAMACHO, P.E.
Executive Director/Contracting Officer

Date: March 12, 2009

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 234-5498 ext. 2300/01/02 Fax: (670) 235-7601
E-mail: procurement@nmcnet.edu, Website: www.nmcnet.edu

AMENDED REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Request for Proposal No.:09-002
NMC FACILITY MASTER PLAN

Northern Marianas College is soliciting sealed proposals for its Facility Master Plan.

Amended Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, commencing March 16, 2009 or Monday thru Friday between the hours of 8:30-11:30 a.m and 1:00-4:00pm.**

Proposal Packages are due no later than 4:00 p.m, March 27,2009 Saipan time at the Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, BLDG L, 2nd Floor, Saipan, MP 96950. In accordance with Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference **is not available to local businesses** in this procurement.

For Proposers located outside of the CNMI: You may request a copy of the RFP via fax (670) 235-7601 or e-mail to Anita Camacho (anitac@nmcnet.edu).

Proposal Due: March 27, 2009 at 4:00PM
NMC Procurement Office, 2nd Floor, Bldg L
Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. Northern Marianas College reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals for any reason and waive any defect in said proposals, or cancel in part or its entirety this RFP, it deems , in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College.

All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response this solicitation and subsequent inquires shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC and will not be returned.

/s/ Anita C. Camacho
NMC Procurement Manager

/s/ Rogelio L. Madriaga
NMC, Chief Financial and Admin. Officer

BEFORE THE COMMONWEALTH PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION'S [CUC] LEAC RATE	DOCKET 09-1
REVIEW OF CUC'S WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES	DOCKET 09-2
PROPOSED CONFIDENTIALITY RULES	DOCKET 09-3

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

On December 19, 2008, the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission [CPUC] established by regulatory order in Docket 09-1 a levelized energy adjustment clause [LEAC] by which it would set and adjust a semi-annual rate to enable CUC to recover its fuel and related expenses. By that order, CPUC established a LEAC rate of $.22989 cents per kWh for the period January 1, 2009 through March 31, 2009 and further directed that its regulatory consultant [Georgetown] recommend a LEAC rate, which would be set for the period April 1, 2009 through September 30, 2009. On March 6, 2009, Georgetown submitted a report, which is available for public inspection on the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's website ***www.saipanchamber.com***. Georgetown recommends that for the six month period commencing April 1, 2009, the current LEAC rate of $.22989 cents per kWh be reduced to $.19327 cents per kWh [a 16% reduction]. CUC has been directed on or before March 20, 2009 to respond to the Georgetown report.

By order dated December 19, 2008, CPUC established Docket 09-2 to review CUC's water and wastewater rates and related issues. Pursuant to this order, Georgetown has conducted a review and on March 6, 2009 submitted testimony to CPUC, which recommends that CUC's current water rate of $25.80 per 10k gallons be increased to a rate in a range between $43.23 to $51.92 per 10k gallons and that its current wastewater rate of $5.50 per 10k gallons be increased to a rate in a range between $13.44 per 10k gallons to $17.40 per 10k gallons. Georgetown submits that these increases are mandated by public law and by the impending Federal Stipulated Order in Federal District Court Civil Case 08-51 *[USA v. CUC and CNMI]*. This report is also available for public inspection on the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's website. CUC has been directed on or before March 20, 2009 to respond to the Georgetown report.

On December 19, 2008, CPUC established Docket 09-3 for the purpose of examining telecommunications regulatory issues. Within this proceeding, CPUC staff has proposed that CPUC adopt confidentiality rules to assure that proprietary information, which is submitted by regulated entities in regulatory proceedings will receive appropriate protection. These proposed rules are available for public inspection on the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's website. CPUC invites public comment on these proposed rules on or before March 27, 2009 either in writing delivered to the office of CPUC's general counsel, Anthony Long, Esq. in San Jose at Box 504970 Saipan MP, by electronic filing to gal@nmilaw.com or at the public hearing scheduled below.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that CPUC will conduct a public hearing, which will commence at 1:00 p.m. on March 27, 2009 at the CNMI Senate Chamber to receive Georgetown's report and testimony in Dockets 09-1 and 09-2 and CUC's position regarding these filings and other regulatory matters. At this hearing, CPUC will welcome the public's attendance and comments at the conclusion of the hearing. Persons who desire to formally participate in the hearing pursuant to 4 CMC § 8409(j) should on or before March 20, 2009 file with CPUC at the office of CPUC's general counsel, Anthony Long, Esq. in San Jose an application and offer of proof in accordance with § 8409(j) and CPUC Procedural Rule 11(c).

CPUC has directed that after the public hearing, its hearing examiner issue a report with recommendations including a proposed order in both dockets, which will filed with CPUC on March 31, 2009 and will also be available for public inspection on the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's website. CPUC will deliberate on this report at a business meeting, which will be duly noticed and will be conducted at 5:00 p.m. on April 2, 2009 at the offices of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

Further information about the public hearing and the public's right to participate may be obtained from CPUC's general counsel, Anthony Long, Esq. at 235-4802.

Nation

Texas jail more like a frat house, authorities say

MONTAGUE, Texas (AP)—For months, perhaps longer, the Montague County Jail was "Animal House" meets Mayberry. Inside the small brick building across from the courthouse, inmates had the run of the place, having sex with their jailer girlfriends, bringing in recliners, taking drugs and chatting on cell phones supplied by friends or guards, according to authorities. They also disabled some of the surveillance cameras and made weapons out of nails.

The doors to two groups of cells didn't lock, but apparently no one tried to escape—perhaps because they had everything they needed inside.

The jailhouse escapades—some of which date to 2006, according to authorities—have rocked Montague (pronounced mahn-TAYG), a farming and ranching town of several hundred people near the Oklahoma line, about 65 miles northwest of Fort Worth.

There were whispers in the past year about an affair between a female jailer and male inmate, but folks dismissed the rumors as small-town gossip. It was not until late last month, when a Texas grand jury returned a 106-count indictment against the former sheriff and 16 others, that the inmates-gone-wild scandal broke wide open.

The indictment charged Bill Keating, sheriff from 2004 until December, with official oppression and having sex with female inmates. The others indicted include nine guards—seven women and two men—who were charged with various offenses involving sex or drugs and other contraband. Four inmates also were charged.

Local, state and federal authorities are still trying to figure out how this small-town Texas jail was turned into something resembling a frat house.

The new sheriff, Paul Cunningham, said he was stunned while touring the jail for the first time just hours after being sworn into office Jan. 1. He saw partitions made of paper towels that blocked jailers' view into cells, and pills scattered about.

Cunningham, who had not worked for the county before his election in November, immediately ordered the jail closed and moved the nearly 60 inmates to another institution.

Obama rejects SC gov's bid to use stimulus on debt

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—The Obama administration on Monday rejected South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford's request to use $700 million in federal stimulus cash to pay down state debt. White House Budget Director Peter Orszag said in a letter to the Republican that the federal stimulus law doesn't allow President Barack Obama to make an exception for that cash. Sanford spokesman Joel Sawyer had no immediate response, but the governor has said he would reject part of the stimulus money if Obama wouldn't give him flexibility in spending it.

The $787 billion stimulus legislation sets strict rules for the $53.6 billion being sent to help state budgets, Orszag wrote. It calls for 82 percent of the money to be used for public schools and colleges and 18 percent on public safety and other government services.

"Congress has not authorized the executive branch to waive any of the above statutory requirements," Orszag's one-page letter said.

Last week, Sanford wrote Obama, saying he wanted to use the money in part to pay down future obligations in the state's retirement system.

"If your administration determines that it is unable to grant us this flexibility, we will in turn opt not to pursue these funds," Sanford wrote.

ACROSS THE NATION

4 bodies found in Mo. home; foul play suspected

RAYTOWN, Mo. (AP)—Police say the bodies of four people have been found in an apartment near Kansas City, Mo., and that they suspect foul play. Raytown police Capt. Ted Bowman says a relative of the four discovered their bodies Monday afternoon when checking in after not hearing from them. A baby boy also was found in the apartment but was unharmed. Police are trying to confirm the identities of the dead and haven't said how they died. Bowman says the victims were a man, a woman and two preteen boys. He says the victims were related but he doesn't know how, and that the boys were not the children of the adult victims or the brothers of the baby. Raytown is 10 miles southeast of Kansas City.

La. police arrest growling man on drug charges

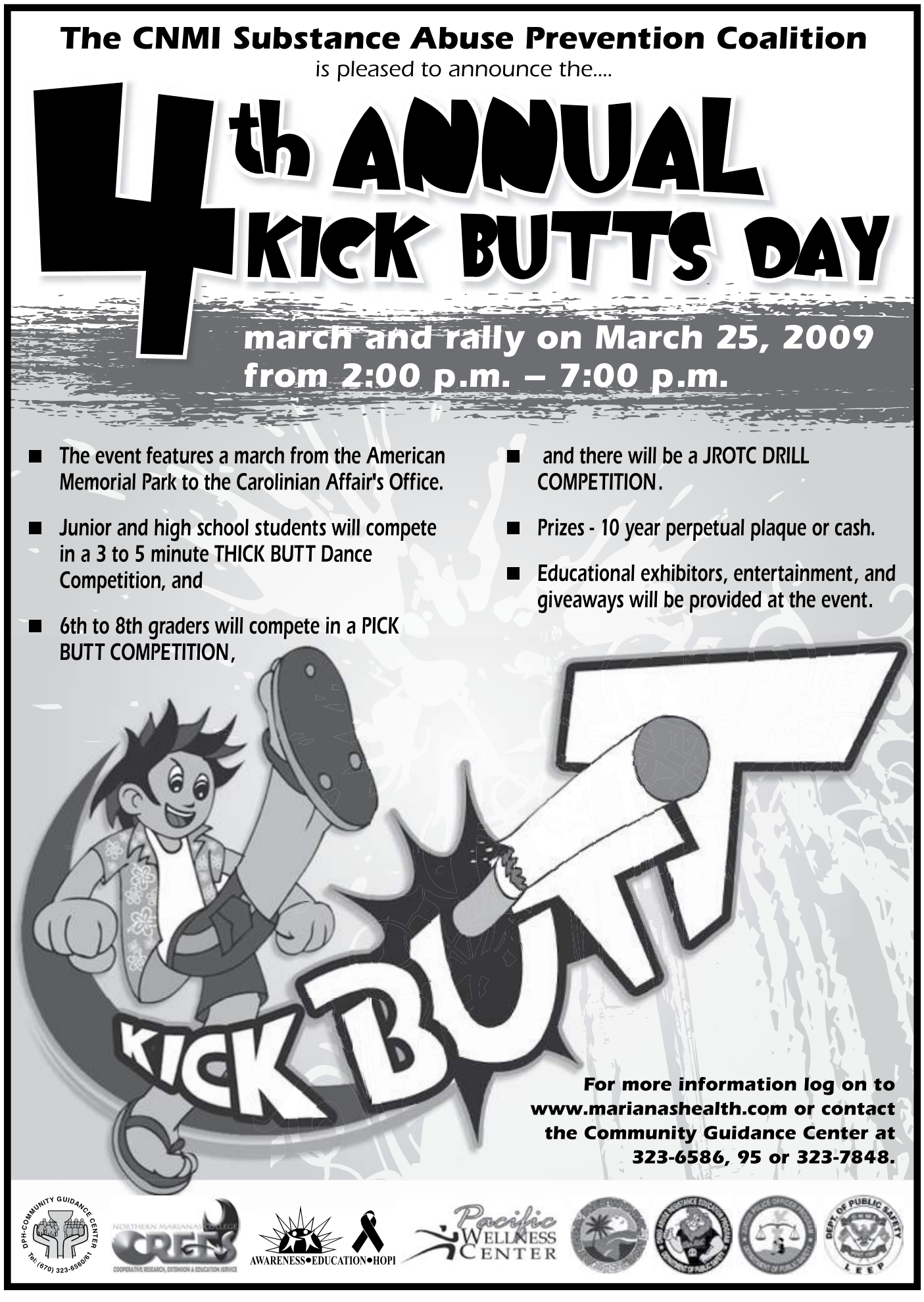
MANSFIELD, La. (AP)—Authorities arrested a 32-year-old Texas man on drug charges on Thursday after construction workers saw him on his hands and knees, eating mud and growling like a dog. A woman who accompanied the man from Texas told investigators he had been wandering around the complex and eating dog food. Sheriff's Lt. Horace Womack said a small bottle of PCP, a half-pound of marijuana and one-fourth ounce of crack cocaine were seized during the man's arrest. The man was booked with possessing all three drugs with intent to distribute them. He was placed in a cell where jailers at the DeSoto Detention Center could keep an eye on him.

NM man pleads guilty to mailing letters, powder

LUBBOCK, Texas (AP)—A New Mexico man pleaded guilty Monday to mailing threatening letters containing suspicious powder to dozens of banks and federal offices across the country, federal prosecutors said. Richard Leon Goyette, 47, of Albuquerque, accepted a plea agreement with prosecutors and pleaded guilty in federal court in Amarillo to one count of issuing threats and false information and one count of making threats and hoaxes, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Texas said in a statement. He had faced 64 counts of making threats and hoaxes after mailing letters from Amarillo to 52 offices and banks in 11 states and the District of Columbia in October. No one was injured and the powder was found to be calcium carbonate, a major component of blackboard chalk.

Lynne Cheney treated for fainting in Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Lynne Cheney has been treated at a Philadelphia hospital and released after she was taken there because she fainted. Hahnemann University Hospital spokeswoman Coleen Cannon says former Vice President Dick Cheney's wife is to return to Washington on Tuesday. She was taken to Hahnemann's emergency department after fainting Monday afternoon. An aide to Dick Cheney says she was in Philadelphia on a private visit with her family. Lynne Cheney waved to reporters Monday night from the back seat of a car next to her husband as she rode away from the hospital .



Asia

RP marines clash with Abu Sayyaf militants

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine marines clashed Monday with al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf militants holding three Red Cross workers on southern Jolo island, possibly wounding a key rebel commander.

Marine snipers fired at a group of Abu Sayyaf gunmen who tried to breach a loose cordon around a forested area near Jolo's Indanan township where the militants have held three International Committee of the Red Cross workers hostage since Jan. 15, Brig. Gen. Gaudencio Pangilinan said.

The military, backed by hundreds of village guards, set up key positions around the area to prevent the kidnappers from escaping with the hostages into the vast mountainous heartland of Jolo island.

Military officials have ordered troops and guards not to launch any rescue attempt to ensure the safety of the hostages and to allow local officials to negotiate the captives' safe release.

The Abu Sayyaf, however, has demanded that the military back off from its stronghold before any negotiation can take place.

Late Monday, a man hurled a grenade into a karaoke bar near the Jolo pier, killing two people and wounding four in what could have been a retaliatory attack by the Abu Sayyaf. The attacker escaped, Jolo police chief Usman Pangay said.

Sen. Richard Gordon, who heads the Philippine branch of the Red Cross, appealed to the military and the Abu Sayyaf not to take any steps that might endanger the hostages—Swiss Andreas Notter, Filipino Mary Jean Lacaba and Italian Eugenio Vagni.

Military officials said they were unaware if any of the three were hurt in the gunbattle.

"We're obviously very concerned," Gordon said.

Pangilinan said no marines were wounded in the clash with at least 10 Abu Sayyaf gunmen.

A marine officer said at least two militants were hit by gunfire, and one of them might have been Abu Sayyaf commander Albader Parad. The marines could not approach to confirm if Parad was wounded or killed because of sporadic rebel fire, said the officer, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

North Korea fully reopens border crossing

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea agreed to fully reopen its border crossing Tuesday to South Koreans commuting to jobs at factories in a northern economic zone, according to the Unification Ministry in Seoul.

The full reopening comes four days after Pyongyang shut down the border last week, stranding hundreds of South Koreans who work in Kaesong but live in South Korea.

North Korean officials agreed to let them return home Monday, but refused entry to others seeking to travel into Kaesong. The partial closure meant factories in the industrial zone had no new deliveries of goods for days.

The North Korean military relayed a letter Tuesday saying it would reopen the border to traffic from the south, Unification Ministry spokeswoman Lee Jong-joo said in Seoul. More than 540 South Koreans were expected to cross into the north, while some 300 applied for permission to head south Tuesday afternoon, she said.



AP

South Korean vehicles arrive at the Inter-Korean Transit Office in Paju, South Korea, near North Korea's border city of Kaesong, on Monday, March 16, 2009.

North Korea has provided no explanation for the closures, which have unnerved business owners who rely on South Korean managers, expertise and raw materials for factories that employ some 38,000 North Korean workers just across the border.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Suicide attack near Pakistani capital kills 9

ISLAMABAD (AP)—A suicide bomber blew up at a busy bus terminal near the Pakistani capital Monday, killing at least nine people and wounding 18 more, officials said. The blast came as Pakistan's leaders sought to end a political crisis that has raised doubts about their focus on fighting Islamist militants blamed for a string of similar bombings in Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan. TV images from the city of Rawalpindi showed rescue workers helping the wounded to ambulances while gloved investigators picked debris from a darkened street among several badly damaged cars and minibuses. City police official Nasir Durrani said rescue workers recovered 10 corpses from the scene, including remains believed to be those of the bomber. Officials had warned of possible suicide attacks in Pakistani cities in the run-up to recent anti-government protests.

Lawyers elated as Pakistan agrees to restore judge

ISLAMABAD (AP)—For two years, Pakistani lawyer Imran Safdar regularly clashed with police, staged hunger strikes and walked off his job to pressure the country's rulers to reinstate the deposed Supreme Court chief justice. On Monday, the 33-year-old joined a more joyful demonstration after learning he and other activists had been successful. Hundreds gathered outside the chief justice's house in Islamabad, cheering, chanting and playing music to celebrate the news of his reinstatement. "I cried. I was stunned. I was wordless," said a sweat-soaked Safdar, wearing the trademark black and white lawyer's suit. "We have sacrificed ourselves. We have damaged our businesses. We faced state fascism!" Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani's announcement that Iftikhar Mohammed Chaudhry would be sworn back in on March 21 headed off a political crisis that threatened to destabilize a government facing a teetering economy and rising Islamist violence. Lawyers called off plans to converge in the capital and stage a sit-in at the Parliament later Monday.

Police find human remains after crocodile attack

DARWIN, Australia (AP)—Police said they found human remains Monday in an Australian swamp where a crocodile snatched an 11-year-old girl. The remains would undergo DNA testing to determine whether they belong to the girl who vanished Sunday while swimming with three children in a swamp on the outskirts of the northern city of Darwin, Northern Territory Police Superintendent Michael Murphy said. A police statement said the find "strongly indicates she has died from a crocodile attack." If confirmed, it would be the second fatal crocodile attack in northern Australia in five weeks. Murphy declined to give details on the remains, which were found in water 500 yards (450 meters) from where the girl was last seen, he said.

World

US says it shot down Iranian drone last month

BAGHDAD (AP)—U.S. jets shot down an Iranian unmanned surveillance aircraft last month over Iraqi territory about 60 miles northeast of Baghdad, the U.S. military said Monday. A U.S. statement said the Ababil 3 was tracked for about 70 minutes before U.S. jets shot it down "well-inside Iraqi airspace" and that the aircraft's presence over Iraq "was not an accident."

An Iraqi official said the Iranian aircraft went down near the Iraqi border town of Mandali. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

The Ababil is believed to have a maximum range of about 90 miles and can fly up to 14,000 feet. It is primarily designed for surveillance and intelligence-gathering.

U.S. officials have frequently accused the Iranians of supplying weapons, training and money to Shiite extremist groups opposed to the U.S. military presence and to the U.S.-backed Iraqi government.

Iran has denied links to militant groups inside Iraq and says the instability in this country is a result of the U.S. "occupation." The Iranians consider the presence of about 140,000 U.S. troops in a neighboring country as a threat to their national security.

In Baghdad, a U.S. soldier was fatally injured during combat operations Monday, the U.S. said in a statement. No further details were released.

It was the first combat death reported by the U.S. military in Baghdad this month and the first among U.S. forces nationwide since March 7, when a soldier was killed in the Tikrit area.

U.S. casualties have dropped sharply since Iraqi soldiers and police have taken a greater role in security. President Barack Obama has pledged to withdraw all U.S. combat troops from Iraq by September 2010.

Austrian admits incest, pleads innocent to murder

ST. POELTEN, Austria (AP)—An Austrian who fathered seven children with a daughter he held captive for 24 years refused to even speak to her for years, coming into the squalid cellar only to rape her, often in front of the youngsters, a prosecutor said Monday.

Wearing a mismatched gray suit and hiding his face behind a folder as the trial began, Josef Fritzl pleaded guilty to incest and false imprisonment, but he denied enslaving his daughter Elisabeth or murdering her newborn son. He pleaded only partially guilty to additional counts of rape and coercion.

The 73-year-old Fritzl faces up to life in prison if convicted of the negligent homicide charge, which stems from the death of the 2-day-old baby boy, who investigators contend might have survived if he had gotten medical care. Incest, by contrast, carries only a one-year sentence.

In her opening statement, prosecutor Christiane Burkheiser portrayed Fritzl as a callous and contemptuous captor who held his daughter in a filthy cramped cellar that didn't even have a shower or warm water and repeatedly raped her in front of the children.

"For the first years there was no communication ... he came, took her, left again," Burkheiser said.

At other times, she said, Fritzl punished his daughter by shutting off the electricity—plunging the dungeon cell into darkness for days at a time. "Josef Fritzl used his daughter like his property," Burkheiser said.

"The worst was ... there was no daylight," she said, adding it was also "incredibly humid" and the air was moldy and stale.

Burkheiser said Elisabeth was "broken" by Fritzl's actions and the uncertainty of her fate and that of her children.

Three of the youngsters grew up in the underground room in the town of Amstetten, west of Vienna, never seeing daylight.

WORLD BRIEFS

Sudan's president: Foreign aid groups must leave

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP)—Sudan's president said Monday he wants all international aid groups out of the country within a year, insisting they can drop off supplies "at airports or seaports" and let Sudanese organizations take care of it. Government officials later tried to downplay the president's comments, calling his directive a "process" and stressing that U.N. agencies operating in Sudan would not be affected. President Omar al-Bashir has already expelled 13 large foreign aid agencies, most of them operating in Darfur, accusing them of spying for an international court that issued an arrest warrant against him on March 4 for war crimes in the western Sudanese region. He also shut down three local aid groups, including one of the largest operating in Darfur. The United Nations said those expulsions would leave millions at risk of a humanitarian crisis. "We directed the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs to Sudanize voluntary work," al-Bashir told a rally of security forces as thousands shouted their support for the president and waved their guns in the air.

Salvadoran leftist president promises moderation

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP)—A charismatic former TV journalist promised to build strong ties with President Barack Obama and promote investor confidence Monday as he took El Salvador into uncharted territory by being elected its first leftist president. Behind Mauricio Funes is a party of former Marxist guerrillas that fought to overthrow U.S.-backed governments in the 1980s and whose rise to power has raised fears of a communist regime in the war-scarred Central American country. Funes, who gave up journalism less than two years ago to become the presidential candidate of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, or FMLN, sought to quell those concerns after his historic victory Sunday. "Nothing traumatizing is going to happen here," he said in an interview with local Megavision television. "We will not reverse any privatizations. We will not jeopardize private property. There is no reason at this moment for fear."

SAfrica protest over new Catholic Mass translation

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—A new translation of the Roman Catholic Mass that is to be introduced worldwide in a few years is getting an accidental trial run in South Africa, where some parishioners are complaining it's too hard to understand. The controversy comes as Pope Benedict XVI travels Tuesday to Cameroon on his first papal pilgrimage to the continent that has the fastest growing congregation of Catholics. Critics say the new, more literal word-for-word translation is part of an attempt to roll back the progress made decades ago when the church halted its insistence on Latin. Before Communion, for example, the prayer "Lord, I am not worthy to receive you" becomes "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof." "One in being with the Father" becomes "consubstantial with the Father" in the Nicene creed. And the congregation's response to the greeting that opens Mass with the priest saying "The Lord be with you," changes from "And also with you" to "And with your spirit." In a misunderstanding, some South African church leaders started using the new version prematurely in some parishes, even though the English-language prayers won't be approved for global use for at least a couple of years. But instead of pulling back in the face of their mistake, they are continuing to use the liturgy.

Campus Life

Finding a purpose for the NMC Alumni Association

BY MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Jesse Torres shares with Saipan Tribune his thoughts about the duty and importance of the newly formed alumni association of the Northern Marianas College. In this critical time of its accreditation, the association president believes that the group will help assist the institution in addressing accreditation requirements and concerns.

Question: When was the NMC Alumni Association formed and what is its purpose?

Answer: It was formed early 2008 with the goal of providing support to the only community college in the CNMI. Our goal is to focus on ways that NMC can continuously improve upon itself by sharing our experiences and observations from when we were students. We also want to help alumni network with each other and contribute to the community.

Q: Why did you want to become the NMC Alumni Association president?

A: At first I wasn't planning on becoming president. I was at the first meeting to see fellow alumni and then was nominated by alumni John Gonzalez and got elected. Nonetheless, I am extremely honored and humbled that my fellow alumni voted to place me in this important position.

Q. Who are considered alumni?

A: Alumni members are those individuals who have obtained degrees, titles, or certificates from an academic unit of the Northern Marianas College, or who have completed at least 24 academic units. Those who want to become registered members of the NMC Alumni Association can log on to www.nmcnet.edu and download an application form.


Torres

Q: How is the NMC Alumni Association assisting the college in meeting accreditation efforts?

A: We meet with NMC staff and provide them with data from the alumni, which WASC has requested for. Data such as how NMC has helped the alumni in regards to their career field and also data like student satisfaction with NMC's performance. We are currently assisting to distribute and collect the alumni survey which will help track student achievement data.

Q: How well did your education at NMC prepare you for your career in the private sector?

A: NMC helped prepare me for my bachelor's and master's degrees. Most of my credits were transferred to Portland State University and I did not have to leave my home island to get my associate degree.

Q: What kind of benefits are you planning to make available for NMC alumni?

A: We want to maximize the number of benefits that are offered to NMC alumni. This includes access to the NMC gym, computer labs, and library. We are approaching businesses as well for discounts for alumni members. If any business wants to offer a special promotion or discount to NMC alumni, it should contact us.

Q: What kind of activities are you planning for NMC alumni?

A: We have an alumni reunion barbecue at Managaha on April 4, 2009. We are expecting a huge turnout for this event.

Q: What kind of advice would you give to high school students who are ready to go to college?

A: Attend NMC before going off island to other colleges. Support our local economy by attending our local college. We all talk about how our economy is dying, but not much action is being taken. The CNMI needs all the help it can get so we can help our economy, and at the same time, obtain an associate degree from NMC. NMC is as good, if not better, as other community colleges in other parts of the U.S. It is accredited by WASC and offers many fields of study.

Golden Harvest students shine again

Golden Harvest International School pupils once again brought home medals and ribbons from the Primary Grade Forensic Regional Competition held March 7, 2009, at the Marianas High School, adding more pride and honor to the school and to their own families as well.

Of the hundreds who joined the competition, Golden Harvest bagged two gold, seven silver and four bronze medals. Proud parents and coaches were there to witness the awarding of medals and ribbons to the winners.

The regional competition consisted of an elimination round followed by the finals. Those who won in the elimination round were given ribbons and those who were able to make it through the finals got a gold medal for first place, silver for seond place, bronze for third place, yellow ribbons for fourth place, and green ribbons for the fifth place.

In almost all the flights, whether in the K-2 or in the 3-5 division, Golden Harvest students were able to qualify and win medals and ribbons. Here is the complete list of the honorees:


CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The winning students of the Golden Harvest International School.

K-2 DIVISION Elimination Round

5th place Duo C Marione Corpuz & Heleina Bautista

rd place Duo A: Jordan Towai & Ramhae Awit

3rd place DI A: Alfie Madlambayan

3rd place HI A: Ronald Fuellas

3rd place HI B: Raesyl Solis

2nd place CSK B: Ronald Fuellas, Fernand Ramos, Danielle Pagsinohin, Allan Tzady Calangi, Angelo Talens

2nd place Duo C: Daphne Cruzat & Faith Bocago

2nd place HI A: Aldraine Galang

2nd place HI B: Faith Bocago

2nd place DI B: Hannah Lacap

1st place DI B: Nicole Santos

1st place DI A: Holly Liban

1st place Duo C: Hannah Lacap & John San Nicolas

1st place HI A: Holly Liban

1st place HI B: Alfie Madlambayan

1st place Duo A: En Ming Cacdac & Giselle Ivy Leong

K-2 DIVISION Medal Round

5th place Choral Speaking: Allan Tzady Calangi, Ronald Fuellas, Angelo Talens, Danielle Pagsinohin, Fernand Ramos

5th place Humorous Interpretation: Raesyl Solis

Bronze Medal, Duo: En Ming Cacdac, Giselle Ivy Leong

Bronze Medal, Humorous Interp: Ronald Fuellas

Silver Medal, Humorous Interp: Faith Bocago

Gold Medal, Humorous Interp: Holly Liban

Gold Medal, Dramatic Interp: Holly Liban

3-5 DIVISION Elimination Round

5th place Duo C: Elizabeth Inos & Francheska Fauni

5th place DI B: Shane Cobacha

5th place HI C: Stephen Seth Alonzo

4th place Duo A: Isa Belle Seman & Tiffany Madlambayan

4th place DI A: Shekinah Grace Armea

4th place CSK B: Francheska Fauni, Emmanuel Cobacha, Elizabeth Inos, Newlyn, Victoria Jeter

2nd place RF D: Angelica Carla Diaz

2nd place DI B: Stevie Jocelyn Jeter

1st place Duo C: Shane Cobacha & Stevie Jocelyn Jeter

1st place CSK A: Isa Belle Seman, Tiffany Madlambayan, Geuel Christian Villacrusis, Cialena De Llamas, Stephen Seth Alonzo

1st place Duo A: Riselle Iris Leong & Shekinah Grace Armea

1st place DI A: Riselle Iris Leong

1st place HI B: Emmanuel Cobacha

3-5 DIVISION Medal Round

4th place, Humorous Interp: Emmanuel Cobacha

4th place, Choral Speaking: Tiffany Madlambayan, Isa Belle Seman, Cialena De Llamas, Stephen Seth Alonzo, Geuel Christian Villacrusis

4th place, Duo: Shekinah Grace Armea & Riselle Iris Leong

Bronze Medal, Dramatic Interp: Riselle Iris Leong

Silver Medal, Choral Speaking: Elizabeth Inos, Francheska Fauni, Emmanuel Cobacha, Newlyn Victoria Jeter

Silver Medal, Duo: Shane Cobacha & Stevie Jocelyn Jeter

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758
Saipan, MP 96950

Tel: (670) 234-7859
Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Administrator, Jeffrey R. Kaipat

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MARIA PIERE MALUS, Deceased.	CIVIL ACTION NO. 99-769D

NOTICE OF HEARING ON THE PETITION FOR DECREE OF FINAL DISTRIBUTION

DATE: APRIL 20, 2009
TIME: 1:30 PM
JUDGE: NAJARA

TO: GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY CREDITORS and THE HEIRS OF:
1. SOLTEIO KAIPAT
2. SISTO MALUS KAIPAT
3. JOSEPHA MALUS KAIPAT
4. CONCEPCION KAIPAT RUBEN
5. CALISTRO MALUS KAIPAT
6. MARIA ROFAG SABLAN

A NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN AND YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that JEFFREY R. KAIPAT of Saipan, Mariana Islands and in his capacity as the Administrator of the foregoing **Estate of MARIA PIERE MALUS, Deceased,** has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for a Decree of Final Distribution in said estate. The Attorney of Record is **Robert Tenorio Torres, Esq., whose address in Plata Drive, Whispering Palms, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950.**

The hearing on said Petition for a Decree of Final Distribution by Jeffrey R. Kaipat, as Administrator, has been set for a hearing on **20th of April, 2009 at the hour of 1:30 p.m.** Courtroom 202A of the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Civic Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

A copy of said Petition for a Decree of Final Distribution is available for review at the Office of the Clerk of Court. If you have any objection to said Petition for a Decree of Final Distribution, you are requested to notify the Clerk of Court and the **Law Office of Robert Tenorio Torres, Attornery at Law, at the address herein-above indicated.** You may also appear at the same time and date set for the hearing on the Petition for a Decree of Final Distribution to present your objection to the above-entitled Honorable Court.

SO ORDERED this 17th day of February, 2009.

/s/ BERNADITA SABLAN
Deputy Clerk of Court

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758
Saipan, MP 96950

Tel: (670) 234-7859
Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Administrator, Jeffrey R. Kaipat

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MARIA PIERE MALUS, Deceased.	CIVIL ACTION NO. 99-769D

ARONGRONG SANGI, NGARE NGALIIR BWE AI IYEEL AIGHUGHUUL KKEPASAL AISSIS

Raal: 4/20/2009
Loll Atoll: 1:30 p.m.
Judge: Naraja

ARONGORONG NGALIIR TOALAP ARAMAS KKA EYOOR YAAR AKAAMWOSCH NGARE TIPITIP AISSIS SANGI:
1. SOLTEIO KAIPAT
2. SISTO MALUS KAIPAT
3. JOSEPHA MALUS KAIPAT
4. CONCEPCION KAIPAT RUBEN
5. CALISTRO MALUS KAIPAT
6. MARIA ROFAG SABLAN

Arongrong nngeliir aramas taolap, bew Jeffrey R. Kaipat melol Saipan Marianas Is. sangi yaal apelughluugh, ngare ello bwe ii eschay school leghleghiil matt, **iye yaal Maria Piere Malus**, eghal tuungor ngali Superior Court of the Northern Marianas bew ebwe feruu aighughul teplaal ngare kkapasal l yaay matt. Attorniil alughughuul matt yeel nge, **Robert T. Torres, esq. Bwulasiol elollo, Plata Dr, Whispering Palm, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Bx 503785, Saipan, MP 96950.**

Arongrong iyaay aighughuul kapasal ngare tittilapal l yaay matt, sangi school leghleghiil, Jeffrey R. Kaipat, ebwe bwel te wool **20th rallil April, 2009 loll atoll 1:30 p.m.** me lol imwal awewe iye re makay Rm. 202A Superior Court of the Northern Marianas Is. Ngali alongeer aramas, taolap ikka remengii bwe eyoor yami tipalugh nare aisiis, ighal tungoor ngali ghami aubwe totto. Ngare eyoor yami Ai-yeegh sangi arongrong, yeel au faingi bwulasiol Clerk of Court be rebwe aliisi ghami, Ghilisao, Olomway.

ATTIWLIGH LOLL 17th rallI February, 2009.

/s/ BERNADITA SABLAN
Deputy Clerk of Court

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd Floor Joeten Commercial Building, Gualo Rai
Saipan, MP 96950

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL DPW09-RFP-012

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE ROUTE 10/ROUTE 100 EMERGENCY REPAIRS, ROTA FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO. CM-NH-1000 (005) ER AND CM-NH-0100 (002) ER

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed proposals from qualified Architectural Engineering companies for the **Construction Management Services for the Route 10/Route 100 Emergency Repairs (ROTA).**

This procurement is made in accordance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations dated May 24, 2001, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference", as amended by Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is **not available** because its use is prohibited by the Federal Law granting the funding for this project. Proposal procedures shall be in full compliance with Section 4-102 of the Procurement Regulations.

Any corporation or partnership "firm" must have or obtained a valid Certificate of Authorization **(COA)** from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Board of Professional Licensing (CNMI BOPL). Individuals and/or sole proprietors are required to possess a valid professional license issued by the CNMI BOPL.

The Scope of Work will be available on or after March 18, 2009 at the Department of Public Works, Technical Services Division, 2nd Floor, Oleai Commercial Center, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of Fifty Dollars **($50.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the DPW Technical Services Division. A **mandatory** Pre-Proposal Conference is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works, Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Gualo Rai Commercial Building on April 3, 2009. Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Mr. Joseph M. Inos, Jr., Director of Technical Services Division, 2nd Floor, Oleai Commercial Center, Saipan, or faxed to (670) 234-3547 no later than 4:30 p.m. local time April 17, 2009.

Proposals will be evaluated and scored bases on the following criteria:

1. Company Background and Qualifications (5 pages maximum each company) **- 25%**
2. Qualifications of Team or assigned personnel and organizational structure (5 pages combined maximum) **- 30%**
3. Past Experience of team and/or assigned personnel on projects successfully completed of similar size and scope (10 pages combined maximum) **- 25%**
4. Current Workload of Firm (5 pages maximum) **- 20%**

Proposals must be sealed and marked **"DPW09-RFP-012"**. For proposers within the CNMI, one original and five (5) copies of sealed proposals must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 10:00 a.m. local time, **April 22, 2009**. Proposers located outside the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a **Notice of Intent to Propose.** Notices of Intent to submit proposals must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than 10:00 a.m. local time, **April 22, 2009** and may be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515 or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For proposers located outside the CNMI, one original and five (5) copies of sealed proposals must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **April 22, 2009** and must be received no later than **April 31, 2009**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

Discussions shall be conducted with at least three (3) of the firms regarding the contract requirements and technical approach and selection made there from, in order of preference, of no less than three (3) firms determined to be the most highly qualified to perform the services required. A contract shall be negotiated with the highest qualified Architect-Engineer firm at a price determined to be fair and reasonable to the government, factors such as the prices proposed by other firms responding to the solicitation shall be considered. If a fair and reasonable price cannot be negotiated with the highest-ranking qualified firm, then additional firms may be selected in order of competence and qualifications and negotiations continued until a fair and reasonable price is agreed upon.

The successful A-E firm will be subjected to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301.

This project is funded in whole by a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHW A). Contract award is contingent upon funding approval by the FHWA. All offerors shall be subjected to the provisions of the Federal Acquisition Regulations Part 52, Subpart 209-5, Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Proposed Debarment, and Other Responsibility Matters, March 1996.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes that will be charged to the proposer awarded a contract for this project, including excise tax.

The Government reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals and to waive any imperfections in any Proposal in the best interest of the Government. All Proposals shall become property of the Government.

/s/ DIEGO B. SONGSONG
Secretary of Public Works

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director of Procurement & Supply

Life & Style

Don Imus says he has prostate cancer

Don Imus has prostate cancer—and confidence in a full recovery.

The 68-year-old radio personality made the announcement Monday on his morning show from New York, which airs on ABC Radio Networks and cable's RFD-TV. He said he wrestled with the idea of making it public, but figured he should because he might have to miss some work due to treatment.

Imus, who has a charity to help children with cancer, said he has early stage cancer, which means it hasn't spread outside the prostate.

A one-time shock jock who now does a show heavy on the media and politics, Imus was fired by CBS Radio and MSNBC in spring 2007 for a racial slur of the Rutgers women's basketball team. He later apologized. He's built his radio network back to the level it was before the incident, although his influence has waned.


Imus

Imus said he was surprised more than anything about the diagnosis, since he's been intent on following a healthy diet for the past decade.

He noted that doctors seemed reluctant to talk about one of his big worries: What prostate cancer treatment will mean for his sex life.

His type of stage 2 prostate cancer can be treated with seed implants, surgery, radiation or sometimes simply monitoring, depending on how aggressive the cancer is, said Dr. Ronald Ennis, director of radiation oncology at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital in New York. (Ennis is not Imus' doctor.)

"It's certainly treatable and certainly has a good chance of being cured," Ennis said.

Generally, one in six men are diagnosed with prostate cancer at some point in their life. More than half of men who reach age 80 have this cancer to some degree, although often at such a small amount that it isn't life-threatening, he said.

Imus said he had spoken to politicians Rudolph Giuliani and John Kerry, who were both treated with prostate cancer. Through a spokesman, Imus later expressed appreciation for the good wishes he'd received from listeners and viewers.

Tyra: 'Top Model' auditions to resume after melee

NEW YORK (AP)—Super model Tyra Banks, host and executive producer of "America's Next Top Model," says auditions for the CW series will continue following the chaos that erupted at a casting call over the weekend.

"To all the 'Top Model' hopefuls who were affected by the New York casting, we are doing everything we can to make sure that ALL the girls who weren't seen, get an opportunity to audition—we'll update you on our plans very soon," Banks said in a statement issued Monday by the CW network.


Banks

Panic ensued among hundreds of people waiting to audition for the show on Saturday outside the Park Central New York hotel in Manhattan, resulting in three arrests and six injuries. The messy scene—which can be viewed on YouTube—caused such a commotion that the street outside the hotel became littered with shoes and clothing.

Police blamed the melee on pushing and shoving that began when the line of hopefuls swelled to a throng of several thousand. Organizers hadn't expected a crowd that size and were overwhelmed by it.

The situation escalated when a smoking car broke down nearby and a rumor spread that it might be a bomb, police said. Three people were cited for resisting arrest and other infractions after they toppled a police barrier, police said.

Smith's psychiatrist posts bail

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Psychiatrist Khristine Eroshevich surrendered Monday to face charges of excessively prescribing drugs to Anna Nicole Smith before the former model's overdose death at 39.

Eroshevich turned herself in at the Van Nuys police station, said police spokeswoman Rosario Herrera.

She was released several hours later after posting $20,000 bail, according to a statement from her attorney Adam Braun's office.

After a lengthy investigation by the attorney general and other state and federal agencies, Los Angeles County prosecutors charged Eroshevich last week with conspiring with another doctor, Sandeep Kapoor, and Smith's lawyer-turned-boyfriend Howard K. Stern to provide Smith with thousands of prescription pills.

Attorney General Jerry Brown said Friday that the doctors wrote prescriptions in fictitious names and prescribed unwarranted amounts of highly addictive medications to Smith, knowing that she was an addict.

Brown described Stern as the "principal enabler" in the alleged conspiracy.

Stern and Kapoor turned themselves in last week and were each freed on $20,000 bond.

Braun has said Eroshevich was only protecting Smith's privacy by writing prescriptions in false names and did not intend to commit fraud.

The psychiatrist, who had treated Smith since 2006, traveled several times over six months to the Bahamas, where the former Playboy playmate was living with Stern and wrote the prescriptions.

Song owner loses Fox lawsuit

NEW YORK (AP)—A judge on Monday tossed out a lawsuit accusing the makers of "The Family Guy" of illegally twisting the dreamy classic "When You Wish Upon a Star" into an anti-Semitic ballad.

U.S. District Judge Deborah Batts in Manhattan said Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp., Fox Broadcasting Co. and the Cartoon Network were within their rights to air the animated TV series episode in November 2003. It has since been broadcast at least 35 more times.

Music publishing house Bourne Co. sued the companies to try to stop distribution of the episode.

The episode was titled "When You Wish Upon a Weinstein" and relied on the premise that the main character had to hire a Jewish person to care for his family finances.

The judge said Bourne's copyright does not protect it from parody.

Batts noted that Bourne reaps the benefit of its song's association with the classic Walt Disney film "Pinocchio" and its reputation for wholesomeness.

"It is precisely that beneficial association that opens the song up to ridicule by parodists seeking to take the wind out of such lofty, magical, or pure associations," she wrote.

She said the U.S. Supreme Court has found that such "deflating uses serve the important social function of shedding light on an earlier work."

The judge also found that the episode's song, "I Need a Jew," would not devalue the market for "When You Wish Upon a Star," despite Bourne's claim that the song was such a thinly veiled copy of the classic that it amounted to copyright infringement.

DEATH & FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. William Sablan Pangelinan

also known as "Bill"



Was called to eternal rest on
Wednesday, March 11, 2009 at
Guam Memorial Hospital, Guam.

Bill was born on August 15, 1958.
He was 50 years old.

In his new life, he now joins his:
Daughter: *†Rachael Dama Castro Pangelinan*
Father-in-Law: *†Gregorio Igibara Castro*
Sisters-in-Law: *†Danita T. Castro, †Leah Shippey*

His memories will live in the hearts of his:
Wife: *Diana Castro Pangelinan*
Children: ***Gary Lee C.*** *& Vanessa Pangelinan (Gavan Lee, Varyssa, Aleanah, Jose)*
Rachael P. *& Frankie Aguon (William Lee, Damalyn, Damien, Deion, Danica)*
Yvonne C. Pangelinan *& Michael R. Sablan (DeVonne, Fionna)*
Roxanne C. Pangelinan *& Victor Jude (VJ) B. Concepcion*

Parents: *Rudolfo & Rosa Pangelinan*
Brothers/Sisters and Spouses:
Renee & John Liggett Sr. & Children
Martin S. & Florence Pangelinan & Children
Cindy S. Pangelinan & Joseph Reyes & Children
Donald S. Pangelinan
Mae Pangelinan & Francisco Santos & Children
Rudy S. & Jenny Pangelinan
James S. Pangelinan & Son
Piding P. & Ernest Sablan & Children
Glenn S. Pangelinan & Abby Inabo & Children

Mother-in-Law: *Susana Taitano Castro*
Brothers/Sisters-in-Law and Spouses:
Cynthia & Antonio Mafnas & Children
Elizabeth T. Castro & Joaquin DlGuerrero & Children
Gregory & Gloria Castro & Children
Berthillia & Robert Dunn & Children
Patricia & Francisco Magofna & Children
Evelyn & William Fleming & Children
John & Victoria Mafnas & Children
Vincent & Hilma Castro & Children

Numerous Aunties, Uncles, Cousins, Nieces, Nephews, and God Children

Schedule of Services:
Mass is being offered every evening at 6:00 pm at San Vicente Church. Nightly rosary follows immediately after the mass until March 18, 2009.

On Thursday, March 19, 2009, the remains will be escorted from Borja Funeral Home to the Mount Carmel Cathedral at 7:30am. Mass of Christian Burial will be offered at 11am. Interment services will follow at Tanapag Cemetery.

Please join us in prayers.

Mrs. Diana Castro Pangelinan, Children, and Family

Message of Appreciation

We the family of the late

Richard Ernest Miranda



would like to extend our sincerest, gratitude for all the prayers, condolences, support that you have extended to us during his time of sickness and on his death and funeral.

We also extend our sincere gratitude to the management, staff, doctors and nurses of CHC the JIL pastor and our brothers and sisters in Christ and the staff and coworkers from CUC, relative and friends and the Borja Funeral Services.

Thank you for the Vietnam affairs staff that always there to help us.

Thank You, Salamat Po.

From Ailene A. Miranda and the extended family

In Loving Memory

Verena Marie Tudela Cabrera



lovingly known as
VERENE
was called to her eternal rest at the age of 18
October 26, 1990 – March 11, 2009

Her love and memories will forever
remain in the hearts of her:

Parents: **Joaquin Mitch I. Pangelinan**
Carmen Tudela Cabrera

Brothers/Sisters and Spouses:
Brenna Lyangeline Tudela Cabrera and
Ramon Garrido Villagomez II
Jacqueena Tomiko Cabrera Pangelinan
Mark Dave and Rosie Pangelinan
Michael Steven and Vivian Pangelinan
Zarah and Clement Bermudes
Ian Francis and Jolene Pangelinan
Gina and Seth Sablan
Justalyn Camacho
Gorjonny Camacho
Leana Camacho

Grandmothers:
Escolastica Tudela Cabrera
Justa Quitano Camacho

Aunties and Uncles:
Linda T. Cabrera
Isidoro T./Susana C. Cabrera
David M./Daria C. Cing
Elroy Jr./Millan C. Hill
Thomas M./Oliva C. Deleon Guerrero
Ghazanfar/Olinka C. Chaudhry
Noel T. Cabrera/Carmen
Anthony T. Cabrera/Riza
Edward A./Gloria C. Reyes
Rita T. Cabrera
Eleonita C. Camacho/George J. Castro
Eloy T. Cabrera

In her new life she now joins her:

Grandfathers:
†Gregorio Camacho Cabrera
†Vidal Acosta Camacho

Uncles:
†Estevan I. Kileleman
†Raymond S. Camacho

Her memory will also live in the hearts of numerous
nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Daily Mass is being offered every morning
at 6:00 a.m. and nightly holy rosary at 7:30 p.m.
at Kristo Rai Church, Garapan.

On **Thursday, March 19, 2009** our beloved Verena
will be escorted from Nuestra Senora Dela Paz
Memorial Chapel at 7:30 a.m. to Kristo Rai Church,
Garapan for viewing and last respect. Mass of Christian
Burial will be celebrated at 1:00 p.m. followed by
interment service at Tanapag Public Cemetery.

Please join us in prayers.

JOAQUIN MITCH I. PANGELINAN /
CARMEN TUDELA CABRERA
AND CHILDREN

Julia Roberts' considered career

By RACHEL ABRAMOWITZ
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES



With family as her top priority, box-office force Julia Roberts can pick her projects. "Duplicity," offering a reunion with Clive Owen, had a script that she deemed worth leaving the nest for.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

HOLLYWOOD—Michelle Obama has nothing on Julia Roberts.

On the Monday after the Oscar ceremony, there was the elusive actress, in a fitted black blazer, jeans and rippling locks, with all the presence of a polished but approachable politician, pressing palms and personally greeting each member of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association—that idiosyncratic group that bestows the Golden Globes—in a conference room of the Four Seasons Hotel. The line to speak with her was long, its denizens frequently shabby and odd and gushing, but Roberts did not flag, dutifully raining that glorious, improbable smile on every grateful scribe and posing for a memorializing photo.

She then disappeared, and returned with her hair upswept, sporting a green, summery linen top. She did a quick photo shoot (as the great "Slumdog Millionaire" actor Irrfan Khan, a hotel guest, stopped by and introduced himself) and retreated for this interview into an almost furnitureless meeting room. She perched on the only couch, eventually slinging one leg up in that idiosyncratic, long-legged recline often seen in her movies and magazine spreads.

Unlike her married peers (Brangelina or TomKat), Roberts and husband Danny Moder have maintained a distinctly more selective media presence, and the Oscar-winning actress has emerged from her cocoon only to discuss her new film, "Duplicity"—the first movie she has top-lined since 2003—which opens Friday.

It's a snarky romance-thriller about two former spies—looking to score really big—in the underhanded world of corporate espionage. She and Clive Owen—the two were last seen viciously battling on screen in 2004's "Closer"—play charming scoundrels, madly in love but congenitally unable to trust. The film, written and directed by "Michael Clayton's" Tony Gilroy, is told through flashbacks and purposeful misdirects, leaving the viewer to puzzle out the extent of almost every character's mendacious ways.

But that's just work. What has preoccupied Roberts for the last few years has been motherhood, and the evidence of her other focus—Henry, 2, and Hazel and Phineas, 4—were seen shortly before the interview, hanging out at the entrance of the hotel. "We move as this pack," says Roberts. "This morning Danny got them ready while I got me ready. Load them up in the car, and here we come."

These days, Roberts has the air less of a star who happens to be a mother and more that of a mother who occasionally dips her toe into the world of work. Even in a vaguely sterile hotel room, she emanates happiness, not the manufactured "I'm happy in this public situation" professional facade but that deep-in-your-bones calm that's hard to fake.

At 41, she is almost (miraculously) wrinkle-free, as if age and gravity have decided just to skip this one person. The skin is tawny, the hair blondish for the moment, the only seeming minute flaw an infinitesimally small mole under one eye—only really apparent on a 20-foot screen. Roberts insists it has always been there, and she and her minions are forever telling the magazines not to airbrush it out because that "blands" out her face.

"Duplicity," a kind of sultry kissing cousin to Steven Soderbergh's jaunty "Ocean's" series (which featured Roberts in the first two installments), keys off her knowing confidence. There's a memorable scene when her character saunters languorously down the streets of Rome in a knockout, form-fitting dress evocative of 1960s Italian cinema. All the time, she's watched by Owen's spy, a man she once seduced and abandoned.

"That dress took us the whole movie to find," she says. "There was a look that Tony was going for. This movie has great style, just a real cool sense of itself. We as a country and culture have gotten sort of sloppy. I love the idea of cleaning it up and buttoning it up and having a point of view visually, wardrobe-wise."

"Duplicity" evinces a kind of genteel cynicism that runs through many of her recent films—with the hipster heisters in "Ocean's," the brutal, adulterous lovers of "Closer" and most recently the carousing congressman in "Charlie Wilson's War." These movies are nothing like her own life, which may be the (un)conscious point, says Roberts. "I think of my life as a pretty sunny existence." Films are "how I explore what I don't want out of my life in a safe place."

The radiant grin, the signature of films such as "Pretty Woman," "My Best Friend's Wedding" and "Notting Hill," exists off-screen for the moment. While contemporaries like Jennifer Aniston and Sarah Jessica Parker are still looking for love in movies, Roberts says: "I can't play those parts anymore. ... It just doesn't work for me at 41, with three kids and happily married. It doesn't hold the same interest that it did for me once upon a time."

■ ■ ■

One notable fact about the shooting of "Duplicity": There were scheduled breaks for breast-feeding. "It was like every 2.5 hours," says Roberts with a laugh. "It was like being Swedish. You felt like the mother is so completely supported in her motherness."

Gilroy wrote "Duplicity" almost eight years ago on assignment from Universal. The film became regenerated when Owen came to a party during the filming of "Michael Clayton" and George Clooney suggested casting Owen in "Duplicity."

"I didn't offer it to (Owen) that night," says Gilroy, but "I did stick around and had a couple of drinks with him, and I saw something there I had never seen before. George was right."

Owen quickly became Gilroy's "co-conspirator" on the project. They both wanted Roberts.

The reason: the chemistry between the leads.

It was Mike Nichols who initially paired Roberts with Owens in "Closer." "She and Clive. ... They pick up each other's rhythms and set up a rhythm together," he says. "They are made to play together."

Or, as Owen says, "Working with her ... the dialogue feels buoyant and alive."

Getting Roberts to sign on for "Duplicity" wasn't exactly easy. Although she loved what she called the script's "intrigue and humor," she was pregnant. "I said to my husband, 'I don't know why I'm reading this. I'm going to have a baby.' I respectfully passed and told them I'm not into working right now," she says.

Time passed. The project recrystallized, and the duo asked again. There was no answer until Gilroy, who lives in New York, got a call seemingly out of the blue that Roberts "wants to see you tomorrow," he recalls.

Gilroy went to Roberts' apartment. "The kids were watching 'Mary Poppins,' " he says. "It was like a daycare center down there. We sat in her kitchen and had tea, and she said, 'If you want to do this next year, I'd really like to do it.' Talk about changing up your life plan in a positive way."

"He was so charming and bright," Roberts says. "I remember saying to him, 'When we get on set, are you going to be the same person that you are in my kitchen?' " says Roberts. The answer was yes and Gilroy had his leading lady.

There is a certain refrain in conversations with Roberts: family. It's clearly the lens through which she sees life, and even when she talks about working with Owen on "Duplicity," her favorite memory is watching him reunite with his wife and two daughters in a shabby bowling alley in Queens, N.Y.

"I looked at the four of them, and thought, 'That is an impenetrable club. They are four people moving together in this whole world,' " remembers Roberts. "It was so touching to me, the way their four heads moved together. That's how I feel about my family."

In the years since she receded slightly from the limelight, no other actress has quite assumed her crown. Many—like Reese Witherspoon, Aniston and Angelina Jolie—are talented and popular, but they don't dominate the box office, and the public imagination, in quite the same way. And who knows if Roberts will return to working with a vengeance after her children have grown up some. "Now I have more reason to stay home, but I'm always happy to work," she says. "I don't really avoid it."

In the meantime, she pursues ambitious activities such as taking the entire brood to India for a couple of weeks, to visit her husband, a cinematographer, who was working there. How does one survive three toddlers on a plane for 32 hours? "That's where not watching a lot of TV or eating junk food comes in handy," says Roberts with a laugh, because once in the air, "It's an unlimited amount of snacks and Netflix."

"They were pretty absorbed by (India), walking around the streets and the monkeys jumping on rooftops. They rode on elephants, saw the Taj Mahal. It was pretty amazing."

As for their exposure to the poverty, Roberts says, "My daughter would say to me, 'Where is that baby's mommy?' For her, it's not about there's a child eating garbage off the streets. It's because the mom's not standing right there. I said, 'Well, Hazel, look at that child, she doesn't even have pants on.' I don't have to say anything awful. It speaks for itself."

Roberts, who used to live in Los Angeles' Venice neighborhood, moved about a year ago up the coast to Malibu, where there is undoubtedly more privacy. A protective mama bear clearly lurks inside the star.

"I've never taken my kids to an event or a premiere. We appreciate privacy. We don't hide, but we want to keep our family to ourselves. I don't want my kids photographed. They're my children. They deserve my privacy. They belong to me. I share them in ways I choose to share them with people that I pick," says Roberts, enunciating each word as if to control her anger over the issue.

When fans come up to her in a restaurant, for example, and say "'I saw a picture of you and your kids,' it makes me sick to my stomach," admits Roberts. It's clear that she's still seeking a balance between her fierce need to protect her children from the spotlight and a down-to-earth acceptance that, "We're all essentially the same person. We're all variations on a theme." As her husband tells her, "For the most part, people are trying hard. They mean well."

Roberts sighs and then smiles. "I have tried to teach myself to leave a little room for that."

Judge quashes arrest warrant for Lohan

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—Lindsay Lohan's next appearance won't be in jail garb.

A Los Angeles Superior Court judge on Monday quashed an arrest warrant that was issued Friday for the 22-year-old "Mean Girls" star.

Judge Marsha N. Revel determined that the actress has been complying with the terms of her probation but needs to show her treatment program better documentation to avoid future court problems. The judge also noted that Lohan has not failed any drug or alcohol tests.

Lohan's attorney, Shawn Chapman Holley, presented Revel with documentation Monday morning that her client had not violated her probation. She said after the hearing that the confusion stemmed from the actress switching treatment programs.


Lohan

"As you saw in court, this was really much ado about nothing," Holley told reporters after the hearing. She said she expects Lohan to successfully complete her probation.

Lohan pleaded guilty in August 2007 to two misdemeanor counts of being under the influence of cocaine; no contest to two counts of driving with a blood-alcohol level above 0.08 percent and one count of reckless driving. She was sentenced to three years of probation.

The plea came after a pair of high-profile arrests in 2007.

Lohan was arrested Memorial Day weekend 2007 after her Mercedes-Benz hit a tree in Beverly Hills. She was arrested in Santa Monica a few weeks later after the mother of her former personal assistant called 911 to report that her car was being chased by an SUV driven by Lohan.

Lohan spent 84 minutes in jail and had to perform community service and undergo drug-rehabilitation treatment.

The possibility of Lohan's appearance and arrest drew dozens of reporters to the Beverly Hills courthouse, but the actress did not make an appearance.

White House: Obama to appear on Leno's show

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama has landed a spot on Jay Leno's late-night talk show, a chance for the president to add a light touch to his effort to get the economy back on track.

NBC says it will be the first time a sitting president has appeared on such a program.

The White House said Monday that Obama will visit "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno" during his trip to Los Angeles on Thursday. NBC will tape the program and then air it that night, after Obama has returned to Washington.

Presidential candidates, Obama among them, have appeared on talk shows during their campaigns.


AP

President Barack Obama, followed by Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, arrives in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Monday, March 16, 2009, to deliver remarks to small business owners, community lenders and members of Congress.

'Borat' star fools Ala. Guard, trains briefly

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP)—The actor best known as "Borat" tricked the Alabama National Guard into allowing him onto a post, giving him a military uniform and briefly letting him train—all, supposedly, for a German TV documentary.

The ruse, which included comedian Sacha Baron Cohen exposing his thong underwear while changing clothes, was going well until a young cadet recognized Cohen and notified older officers who weren't familiar with the actor.


Cohen

"It's an embarrassment to the Alabama National Guard," Staff Sgt. Katrina Timmons said Monday. "Since then we have put in protocols to make sure this doesn't happen again."

A film crew pulled the stunt Feb. 13 at the Alabama Military Academy, which trains officer candidates from across the nation. The school is located at the Army's old Fort McClellan in Anniston, about 65 miles east of Birmingham.

Footage from the visit could be included in Cohen's upcoming movie featuring his character Bruno, a gay Austrian fashion writer. The reported title is "Bruno: Delicious Journeys Through America For The Purpose Of Making Heterosexual Males Visibly Uncomfortable In The Presence Of A Gay Foreigner In A Mesh T-Shirt."

Cohen's spokesman, Matthew Labov, declined comment.

Guard officials who let Cohen and his crew into the Alabama base initially believed they were helping foreign journalists.

"They called and said they were a German affiliate of a TV station doing a documentary on what it was like to be in officer candidate school," said Timmons. "They wanted to know if they could come here and embed one person for a few hours up to a day."

Military officials met Cohen and his crew at the gate.

"He was treated like a member of the media and escorted around. He was put in a uniform like he requested to allow him to get a taste of what it was like to be an officer candidate," she said.

The actor's schtick should sound familiar. Cohen portrayed uncouth journalist Borat Sagdiyev in the 2006 hit "Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan," in which he traveled the United States fooling people with gags.

The film included a scene shot at a dinner party in suburban Birmingham.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Connick set to receive honorary Tulane degree

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—New Orleans native Harry Connick Jr. is getting honors from Tulane University. He is one of four people receiving honorary degrees from the school in May. The musician and actor used his celebrity to draw attention to the rebuilding effort in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. Connick co-founded the Musicians Village to help provide housing for musicians in the city. Also being honored: Francoise Barre-Sinoussi, who shared in a 2008 Nobel Prize for the discovery of HIV; architect William McDonough, who's working with Brad Pitt's Make It Right project to rebuild housing in the Lower 9th Ward; and health care advocate Jessie Gruman. Tulane spokesman Mike Strecker says he expects all four to attend the May 16 commencement.

DJ AM seeks $20 million for plane crash damages

LOS ANGELES (AP)—DJ AM is seeking $20 million in damages related to a plane crash in South Carolina last year that killed four others. The celebrity disc jockey, whose real name is Adam Goldstein, is suing the plane's manufacturer, Learjet, and several other companies. Goldstein is seeking $10 million for medical expenses, lost earnings, profits and economic damages and another $10 million related to non-economic losses, such as mental and physical pain, according to a document filed Friday. A jury will decide any damage award if the case goes to trial. Several of the companies sued last year by Goldstein and fellow crash survivor Travis Barker are seeking a trial delay until after a government investigation of the Sept. 19 crash is complete. A lawyer for Learjet did not immediately return a phone message on Monday afternoon.

It's a boy for Carson Daly

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Talk show host Carson Daly has a new full-time guest. Daly's publicist Heather Lylis said the 35-year-old TV personality and girlfriend Siri Pinter are the proud parents of a baby boy. Jackson James Daly was born Sunday, weighing 7 pounds, 8 ounces. It's the first child for both the "Last Call with Carson Daly" host and Pinter, who has worked at Daly's show and "Last Comic Standing" as an associate producer.

Steve-O skips 'Dancing' because of back injury

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A dancing stunt knocked down Steve-O. The reality star was forced to skip Monday's "Dancing With the Stars" after falling on his back during a dress rehearsal earlier in the day. He landed flat on his back after a failed front flip, smashing his spine into the microphone pack all performers wear. The 34-year-old was already nursing a pinched nerve in his back. The funnyman didn't break any bones, said dance partner Lacey Schwimmer, but he hasn't yet been cleared to dance on future episodes.

Poem's simple truth benefits family through generations



DEAR ABBY: When I was growing up, my parents had a framed poem from your column hanging on our kitchen wall. None of us kids could miss it because it was right next to the telephone. Before we moved out to start families of our own, Mom gave each of us framed copies of it to remind us of family values.

Won't you please run it again for your readers? The title of the poem was "Success." Young couples today would find it as beneficial as my parents did. It worked for my sisters and brothers and me.

MIMI IN LOS ANGELES

DEAR MIMI: I'm glad to oblige. The poem, which was penned by Martin Buxbaum, is included in my "Keepers" booklet, which is a collection of favorite letters, poems and essays that have appeared in this column over the years. It was assembled because so many readers said the items were meaningful to them, and requested that they be compiled as a booklet. Read on:

SUCCESS
You can use most any measure
When you're speaking of success.
You can measure it in fancy home,
Expensive car or dress.
But the measure of your real success
Is the one you cannot spend.
It's the way your kids describe you
When they're talking to a friend.

The booklet is titled "Keepers" because so many Dear Abby readers kept the poems, essays and letters to re-read. It can be ordered by sending your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

"Keepers" covers subjects from temptation to forgiveness, animals, children and human nature. Filled with down-to-earth nuggets of wisdom, both witty and philosophical, it's a quick and easy read, and an inexpensive, welcome gift for newlyweds, pet lovers, new parents or anyone recovering from an illness because it touches on a variety of subjects.

DEAR ABBY: My single, 40-year-old cousin, "Gail," has two teenage daughters. Four years ago she built a beautiful three-bedroom house that she has never moved into. Instead, she lives with her mother and stepdad in a rundown farmhouse where her girls share a bedroom.

Gail's mother is afraid to ask her to move out, and the rest of the family can't understand why she would allow her house to stand empty. Let me add that Gail has an annual salary of almost six figures.

What's wrong with this woman?

PERPLEXED COUSIN IN N.Y.

DEAR PERPLEXED COUSIN: Which woman? The mother or the daughter? I suggest that you ask them that question.

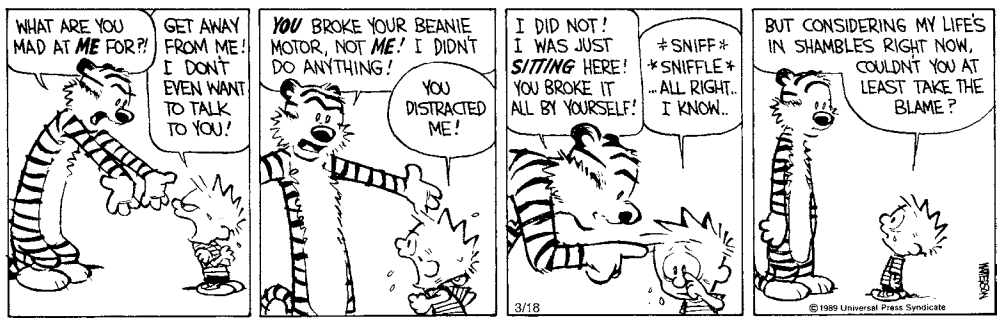
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



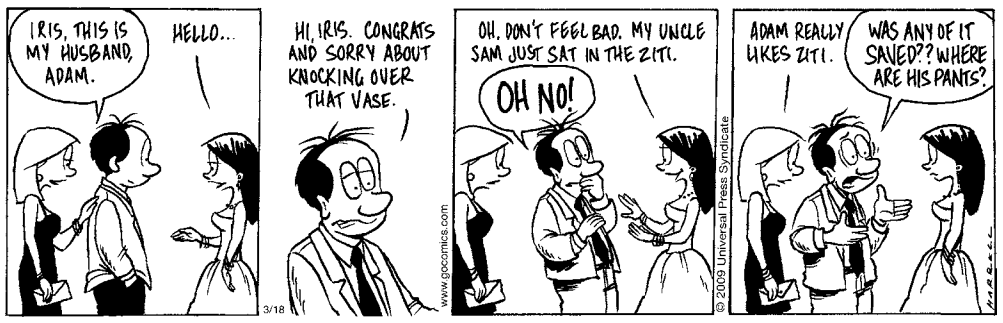
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



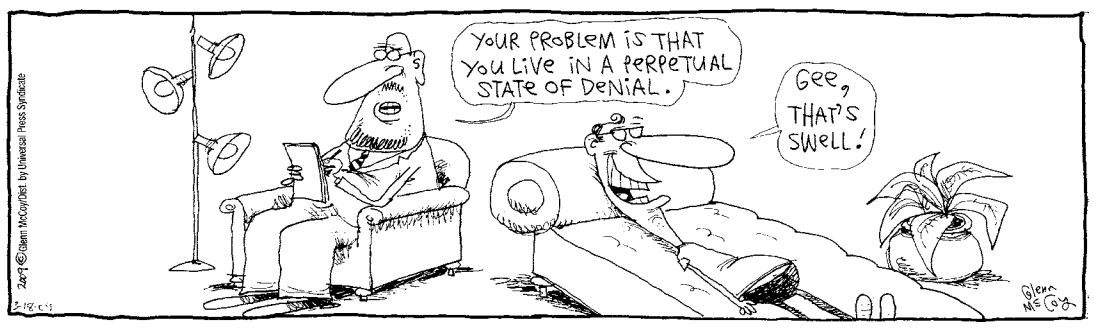
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

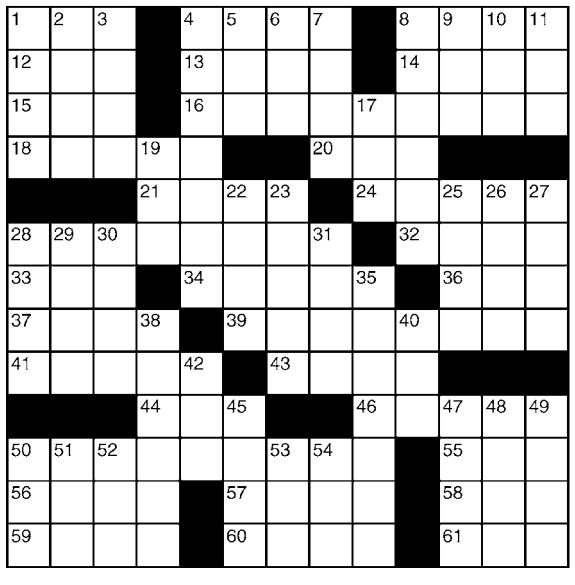
ACROSS
1 Help
4 Site of Apra Harbor
8 Roosevelt successor
12 Omega preceder
13 Incite
14 Shrek, for one
15 Golfer Ernie
16 Classic Cadillac
18 "Unleaded" brew
20 Family
21 Jamie of "M*A*S*H"
24 Turning point
28 Robin Hood's forest
32 Green land
33 Whammy
34 Some wrestling matches
36 Born
37 Bedouin
39 "Gran Torino" star
41 Minion of Satan
43 Approach
44 Existed
46 U-Haul competitor
50 Tinseltown
55 Water (Fr.)
56 Ontario neighbor
57 Florence's river
58 Pompous sort
59 Require
60 Verse
61 Allow

DOWN
1 Mimicked
2 Last word in Gilligan's theme
3 Platter
4 Hearty laughs
5 It starts with "http:"
6 Time of your life?
7 Timid
8 Local, to a collegian
9 Past
10 To and —
11 Kennedy or Koppel
17 Gratuity
19 A cont.
22 Libertine
23 Typeface option
25 Provider of veritas
26 Sandwich treat
27 Prepared to drive
28 Roe source
29 Present
30 Physical
31 Tablespoonful or tablet
35 Fame, in 50-Across
38 Partook at kegling
40 Distort
42 Aye canceler
45 Trade
47 Option from Howie
48 Facility
49 Oxidation
50 Coop dweller
51 Raw rock
52 Falsehood
53 Plata's partner
54 Inseparable

Solution time: 21 mins.

U	R	A	L	■	E	G	G	S	■	S	O	D
M	A	G	I	■	T	E	A	K	■	E	R	E
A	D	A	M	A	N	T	L	Y	■	V	A	N
■	■	■	B	R	A	S	■	J	O	E	L	Y
B	I	G	O	T	■	■	M	A	N	N	■	■
O	N	U	S	■	P	L	A	C	A	T	E	D
S	K	I	■	P	L	U	C	K	■	E	G	O
S	Y	N	D	R	O	M	E	■	L	E	A	N
■	■	E	Y	E	D	■	■	B	E	N	D	S
L	E	V	E	E	■	S	W	I	G	■	■	■
I	R	E	■	M	A	C	A	D	A	M	I	A
F	I	R	■	P	L	A	N	■	T	O	R	N
E	K	E	■	T	E	N	D	■	E	W	A	N

Yesterday's answer 3-18



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Dane Cook, 37; Queen Latifah, 39; Vanessa Williams, 46; Brad Dourif, 59

Happy Birthday: Don't let confusion and uncertainty bog you down and stop you from getting ahead. There will be lots of hidden matters to contend with, so ask questions before you make a decision. Keeping a low profile but a high work ethic will help you maintain your status and emotional well-being. Your numbers are 2, 7, 16, 28, 37, 40, 45

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Problems with officials, documentation or just disagreements should be taken care of upfront and fast. Don't let the wrong impression stand in your way. Do something nice for your romantic partner or, if single, get out and you'll meet someone new. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Don't mix emotions with finances. If someone is playing on your good nature in order to get something out of you, don't fall for it. You can make suggestions but as soon as you pay for someone, your relationship with that person will change. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): The opportunities you get will not sit right with some of the people you know. Jealousy will play a role so be careful not to give anyone ammunition to use against you. An added responsibility may be given to you. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Sit back and let the changes going on around you fall into place. Lashing out emotionally before you actually know what the end result is will be futile and will cost you dearly. Acceptance will lead to a good impression. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Your outgoing nature will open up doors to new partnerships that can enhance your personal and professional position. Put on the charm but try not to lead anyone on emotionally or you may have to pay the consequences. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You have plenty to be thankful for and lots of plans to make your life better. Alterations to your living quarters will turn out well. A chance to engage in an emotionally beneficial encounter will leave you wanting more. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): A push will make you decide quickly what you should do about a troublesome relationship. Either set the record straight or pull out. You need new activities or events as avenues to meet people with common interests. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): How you earn your living will take on a whole new meaning. You can launch or integrate something you've been working on to a totally new application. A sudden change in the structure and the way you approach someone or something will make the difference. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't confront anyone before you have thought matters through. Love is on the line and so are your emotions and your future. Avoid meddlers and stay out of everyone else's business as well. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): A change of plans will suit your needs but someone you care about may not be happy with the decision you make. Decide if it is worth putting up with the negativity. A secret encounter will be enticing but isn't the answer. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Getting involved in a group or organization that will help you meet people will be good for you. Love is in the stars and opportunities to show others what you have to offer will lead to bigger and better things. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): You'll be confused and scattered, causing you to make some mistakes if you let your emotions take over. Deal with anyone who is trying to make you look bad before he or she has a chance to do any real damage. Your reputation may be at risk. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You have spunk, audacity and tenacity all mixed up into a dynamite presence. You are inquisitive, thrill-seeking and a masterful chameleon.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

					9	5	6	
				3				
	7	1	5		6	8	3	
6	3			4			7	8
7								3
2								1
8								6
	9						2	
		4	1	5	2	9		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/18

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

4	3	8	5	1	7	6	9	2
9	1	6	8	4	2	3	5	7
2	5	7	3	6	9	8	4	1
6	8	2	7	9	1	5	3	4
5	7	4	2	3	8	1	6	9
1	9	3	4	5	6	2	7	8
8	4	9	6	2	3	7	1	5
7	6	5	1	8	4	9	2	3
3	2	1	9	7	5	4	8	6

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/17

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

HEART STATIN DRUGS — Solution: 9 letters

G	N	I	B	R	O	S	B	A	E	C	U	D	E	R
I	N	B	L	O	C	K	I	N	G	F	L	O	W	O
T	O	L	C	S	T	I	F	E	N	E	B	O	H	T
E	M	E	D	I	C	A	T	I	O	N	N	F	C	I
T	I	V	H	S	E	N	E	G	O	O	T	T	I	P
A	N	E	B	T	O	I	R	I	I	L	A	V	T	I
L	O	L	T	M	L	E	T	T	I	S	E	E	E	L
U	I	S	M	R	G	A	P	F	P	E	R	S	H	O
M	T	O	A	U	N	I	E	D	E	I	T	S	T	H
I	C	T	L	I	R	S	I	H	S	R	L	E	N	C
T	E	A	B	C	T	S	T	K	O	E	T	L	Y	A
S	T	M	S	Y	E	T	E	I	D	T	R	S	S	V
E	O	E	L	A	D	O	O	L	B	R	A	N	D	A
C	R	E	S	T	O	R	H	C	R	A	E	S	E	R
P	P	E	Z	I	L	I	B	A	T	S	H	O	R	P

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Absorbing, Agent, Arteries, Benefits, Blocking, Blood, Brand, Clot, Combination, Common, Crestor, Diet, Disease, Dose, Flow, Food, Genes, Habits, Health, Heart, Levels, Lifestyle, Lipitor, Medication, Pills, Pravachol, Prescription, Protection, Rates, Reduce, Regulate, Research, Risk, Stabilize, Stimulate, Synthetic, Treat, Vessels

Yesterday's Answer: Gregorian

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF SAIPAN, Plaintiff, vs. LUIS A. SASAMOTO, Defendant. — CIVIL ACTION NO. 01-0044 — FIRST AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuan to a Writ of Execution issued by the Court in this matter on December 15, 2008, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 060 T 01, situated in Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 10,000 square meters, more or less, shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 060 T 00 dated October 12, 1990, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 91-083, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, April 17, 2009, at the hour of 11:30 a.m., at the Courthouse in Tinian. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 10th day of March, 2009.

/s/ **MICHAEL A. WHITE**
Auctioneer

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For more information, please contact the Bank of Guam Credit Department at telephone number (670) 236-2700 extension 3203, 3204, 3205 and 3206. Bids will be closed on
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at **6:00 p.m.**

The Bank reserves the right to reject any or all offers.

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, Plaintiff, vs. The Estate of SOLEDAD K. SOMORANG, Deceased, and SUSAN K. SOMORANG, Defendants. — CIVIL ACTION NO. 07-0476 — NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuan to a Order issued by the Court in this matter on March 5, 2009, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 005 1548, situated in Koblerville, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 885 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 2084/82, the original of which was registered with the Land Registry as Document No. 14232 ono May 14, 1982, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, May 1, 2009, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at the Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 9th day of March, 2009.

/s/ **MICHAEL A. WHITE**
Auctioneer

LAW OFFICE OF LOREN A. SUTTON
LOREN A. SUTTON, ATTORNEY AT LAW
SUMMER HOLIDAY HOTEL, SUITE 7101
P.O. BOX 5593 CHRB
SAIPAN, MP 96950

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION OF: DANNI HUANG PUA, a minor child, By: JUAN FAISAO PUA, Petitioner. — CASE NO. 07-0493 — NOTICE OF HEARING

TO: ALL INTERESTED PERSONS
Notice is hereby given that Juan Faisao Pua has filed a verified petition for the adoption of a minor child in the Commonwealth Superior Court. The original petition is available for review at the office of the Clerk of Court at Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and at the Law Office of Loren A. Sutton, Suite 7107, Summer Holiday Hotel, Garapan, Saipan.

A hearing in the above entitled matter will be held on March 26, 2009, at 1:30 p.m. before the Honorable Kenneth L. Govendo, in the Superior Court, Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 5th day of March, 2009.

/s/ Clerk of Court

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, Plaintiff, vs. The Estate of FRANCISCO SEMAN IBA, Deceased, and MARGARITA BORJA IBA, Defendants. — CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-0008 — FIRST AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuan to a Order issued by the Court in this matter on December 4, 2009, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 021 T 48, situated in San Jose Village, Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 867 square meters, more or less, as shown on Cadastral Plat No. 021 T 02, the original of which was registered with the Commonwealth Recorder as File No. 84-1597 on August 15, 1984, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, April 17, 2009, at the hour of 11:30 a.m., at the Courthouse in Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 10th day of March, 2009.

/s/ **MICHAEL A. WHITE**
Auctioneer

LI CHEN
PMP 1900 B. 10005,
SAIPAN, MP 96950
TEL. 233-8989

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Petition for the Change of Name of: KANG DU, a minor child, By: LI CHEN, Petitioner. — FCD-CN CA NO. 09-0089 — ORDER PRESCRIBING NOTICE

Li Chen, Petitioned the Court for an order legally changing the name of Kang Du, a minor child, to Yu Liang Chen.

Petitioner shall publish notice at least once before the hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Petitioner shall post notice at the Courthouse for a period of (10) days before the hearing date.

Dated 2nd day of March, 2009.

/s/ KENNETH L. GOVENDO
Associate Judge

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• 5-Liner with picture	$55

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Classified Ads

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Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Rockets down Hornets, 95-84

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Ron Artest scored all of his 18 points in the second half, and the Houston Rockets overcame the absence of center Yao Ming in a 95-84 victory over the New Orleans Hornets on Monday night.

Luis Scola and Aaron Brooks each scored 14 points, and Scola had 12 rebounds to help the Rockets end New Orleans' five-game home winning streak.

Chris Paul had 29 points and 11 assists, while David West had 16 points and 13 rebounds for the Hornets, who've lost two straight.

Yao sat out with flu-like symptoms and Dikembe Mutombo started in his place.

Carl Landry and Von Wafer each scored 12 points and Shane Battier 11 as the Rockets, holding on to the third seed in the Western Conference, prevented the Hornets from passing them in the standings.

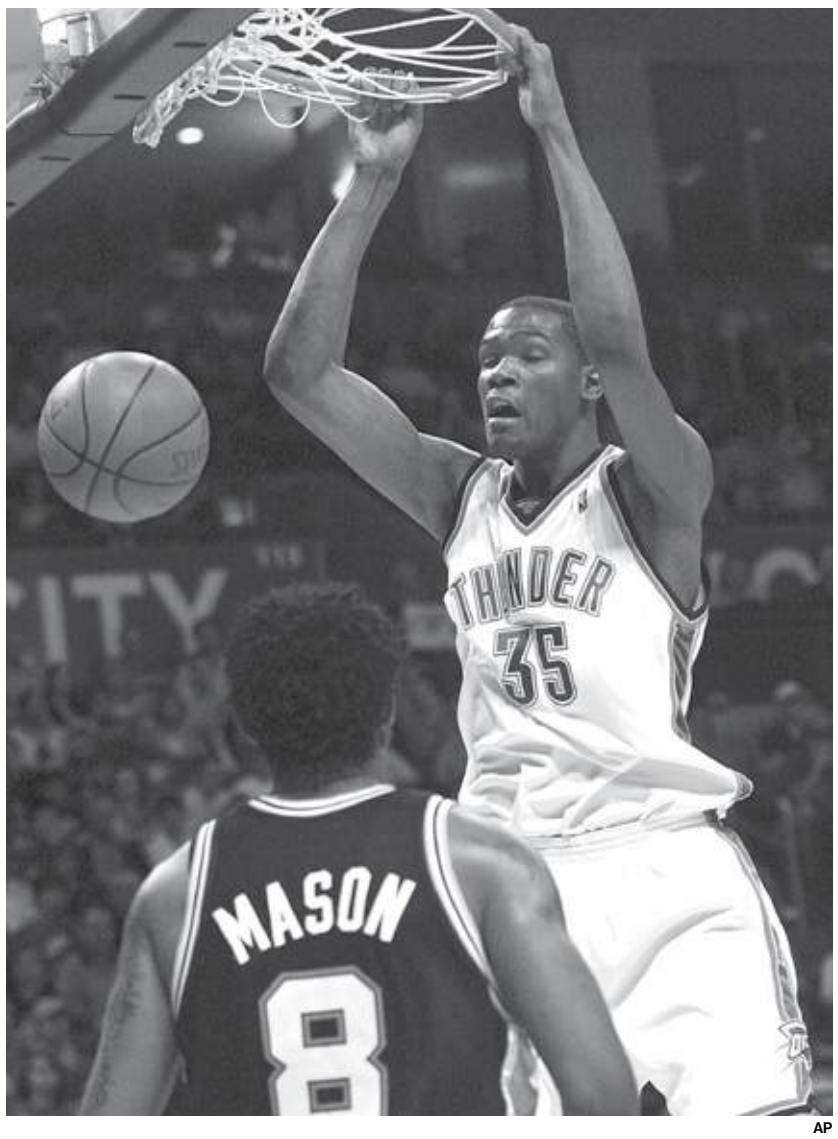
The Hornets appeared to be taking control of the game early in the second half, when alley-oop dunks by Julian Wright and Tyson Chandler highlighted an 8-0 Hornets run to give New Orleans a 55-44 lead. Houston coach Rick Adelman quickly called timeout, and the Rockets returned in far better form.

Artest, who'd missed his first 11 field goals, got his first points on free throws, then made his next four shots and added an assist on Scola's driving scoop during a 16-2 spurt that put Houston ahead 62-59.

New Orleans got only five points the rest of the quarter, all from Paul, whose floater as he was fouled cut Houston's lead to 67-64 heading into the final period.

James Posey's 3 to open the fourth quarter tied the game, and the Hornets led 75-73 on Posey's baseline drive with 7:01 to go.

Houston responded with an 8-0 run during which Landry swatted away Paul's floater and later hit two free throws. Artest also scored during the surge.



AP

Oklahoma City Thunder guard Kevin Durant dunks in front of San Antonio Spurs guard Roger Mason during the third quarter of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City, Monday, March 16, 2009. Durant had 25 points as Oklahoma City won 78-76.

After West's jumper briefly stopped to run, Artest scored again on a driving layup and Landry dunked on a fast break to make it 85-77 with 3:47 left. The Hornets were stagnant after that, and Chandler fouled out while battling Landry for a rebound with 1:18 to go.

Despite the absence of Yao, Houston finished with a 38-37 edge in rebounding. Mutombo scored only one point but had six rebounds and blocked Wright three times on drives to the hoop, wagging his finger every time.

Houston used a 14-3 run, highlighted by Landry's two dunks, to take a 34-26 lead early in the second quarter, mostly with Paul on the bench. Houston was shooting better than 54 percent when Brent Barry's fade off the glass gave the Rockets a 39-31 lead, and New Orleans trailed 41-33 when Paul returned with a little under seven minutes left in the second quarter.

The Hornets immediately pulled back ahead as Paul scored eight points, six on free throws, during an 10-0 run.

The Rockets went about 6:30 without a field goal during that spurt, which Houston finally snapped on Scola's short jumper to tie the game at 43. Paul, who had 10 points in the second quarter, added a fadeaway in the final seconds to give New Orleans a 47-44 lead at halftime.

Thunder 78, Spurs 76

At Oklahoma City, Kevin Durant scored 25 points, Thabo Sefolosha added 12 and the Thunder spoiled Gregg Popovich's 1,000th game as San Antonio's coach.

The Thunder didn't lead until midway through the fourth quarter, but kept San Antonio to its season low in scoring and escaped when Tony Parker missed a 3-pointer from the left side in the closing seconds.

Popovich could only shrug with his palms of his hands pointed toward the sky as the clock struck 0:00.

Parker scored 28 points to lead San Antonio, and Tim Duncan had 14 points and 12 rebounds. Matt Bonner added 10 points.

Oklahoma City won for the fourth straight time at home.

Bobcats 112, Raptors 86

At Charlotte, N.C., Gerald Wallace scored 25 points and the Bobcats began an important week for their playoff hopes by beating the Raptors to snap a three-game losing streak.

D.J. Augustin added 15 points for the Bobcats, who moved within one game of idle Milwaukee and Chicago in the crowded race for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

Chris Bosh had 18 points and 14 rebounds for the sloppy Raptors, who committed 24 turnovers and lost for the eighth time in nine games.

Trail Blazers 103, Grizzlies 92

At Memphis, Tenn., LaMarcus Aldridge had 22 points and eight rebounds, and Brandon Roy finished with 20 points and nine assists to lead Portland. Travis Outlaw added 18 points and Joel Przybilla had 13 points and 13 rebounds for the Trail Blazers, who are trying to reach the Western Conference playoffs for the first time since 2003. Portland entered the game in the sixth spot in the West.

O.J. Mayo scored 21 points and handed out six assists to lead Memphis, which lost its 13th game in the last 15. Mike Conley had 20 points, and Rudy Gay score 17 and grabbed 11 rebounds. Hakim Warrick finished with 15 points on 7-of-10 from the floor.

Nuggets 121, Nets 96

At Denver, J.R. Smith and Nene scored 19 points each, Chauncey Billups had 14 points and 10 assists and the Nuggets extended their winning streak to three.

Vince Carter scored 32 points for the Nets, who went 0-4 on the Western Conference portion of their five-game road trip. New Jersey plays at the New York Knicks on Wednesday.

The Nets played without injured point guard Devin Harris and forward Sean Williams, who was arrested Monday at a cell phone store in a mall in suburban Denver on accusations he got into an argument with a clerk and threw a computer monitor.

Broncos QB Cutler skips first team meeting

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP)—Jay Cutler was a no-show on Monday for coach Josh McDaniels' first team meeting and the start of the Denver Broncos' offseason workouts, and if he gets his way, he'll never step foot in the team's training facility again. "The Denver Broncos confirm that Jay Cutler has requested a trade," team spokesman Jim Saccomano told The Associated Press on Monday.

ESPN first reported that Cutler, still upset that the Broncos tried to trade him for New England quarterback Matt Cassel last month, had asked for a trade through his agent, Bus Cook.

Cook, who was traveling, didn't return phone calls to The AP. The *Denver Post* quoted McDaniels as saying he wanted to meet again with Cutler to try to resolve their differences before considering a trade.

Cutler told ESPN he would attend every mandatory minicamp and training camp but would skip the offseason training program, which won't subject him to fines. Although it's voluntary, the coaches expect everyone to attend the team's offseason program.

The Broncos' first minicamp is April 17-19, a week before the draft.

Cutler and McDaniels met face-to-face Saturday along with Cook and general manager Brian Xanders. Cutler was expecting a reconciliation, but the meeting didn't go well from his standpoint, resulting in the trade request.

The Broncos have said they have no interest in trading their star quarterback, who set several team passing records last season and just played in his first Pro Bowl.

It's looking increasingly likely, however, that trading Cutler might be the only way to resolve the dispute.

Cutler has been unhappy since learning that McDaniels, who was New England's offensive coordinator the last three seasons, entertained the notion of trading him to Tampa Bay in a three-way swap that would have brought Cassel from the Patriots to Denver. New England instead traded Cassel to Kansas City.

Cutler believes McDaniels, who replaced Mike Shanahan in January, misled him about those trade talks.

McDaniels has said all he did was listen to the trade proposals, as he would with any player, as he tries to rebuild a Broncos team that hasn't been to the playoffs since 2005.

The Broncos have been the NFL's most active team in free agency, signing 15 players, including quarterback Chris Simms, a former starter in Tampa Bay who has thrown just two passes since having emergency surgery to remove his spleen after a game in 2006.

Simms signed for two years and $6 million, ostensibly to serve as Cutler's backup.

NFL *players may have died hours after boat toppled*

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Two NFL players may have died just a few hours after their fishing boat capsized in rough seas and possibly before rescuers were even alerted that they and two others were lost off the west coast of Florida, according to Coast Guard records.

The lone survivor, Nick Schuyler, told the Coast Guard that one by one, the other three men took off their life vests and disappeared during the ordeal that began the evening of Feb. 28, according to a 23-page report provided to The Associated Press Monday under a Freedom of Information Act request.

The Coast Guard report, which redacts the men's names, says the group went roughly 70 miles—or 62 nautical miles—to fish for amberjack. Besides the 24-year-old Schuyler, also aboard the 21-foot Everglades boat were Oakland Raiders linebacker Marquis Cooper, free-agent NFL defensive lineman Corey Smith, who played for the Detroit Lions last season, and former University of South Florida player William Bleakley. The bodies of Cooper, Smith and Bleakley have not been recovered.

Around 5:30 p.m., the report said the group ran into trouble: Their anchor was stuck. Schuyler told investigators that he believed it was caught in a coral reef and they tried to free it, but water filled the boat and it capsized.

Tossed into the frigid water, the men managed to grab their life vests. Schuyler, also a former South Florida player, said they held on to the boat for four hours. But as the night wore on, their will to survive appears to have weakened and the effects of hypothermia were likely setting in.

Schuyler told the Coast Guard that one of the men "freaked out" and took off his life vest and disappeared that night.

Another started getting unruly, throwing punches and later took off his life jacket, dove under the water and was never seen again. The third man thought he saw land nearly two days after the boat capsized and decided to swim for it.

That man said his life jacket was too tight and he took it off, Schuyler told the Coast Guard.

Officials have said they found three life jackets: one on Schuyler, another near the boat and a third underneath.

It's unclear how accurate the account is. Schuyler, who was found clinging to the overturned boat about 35 miles off Clearwater and nearly 48 hours after the accident, was suffering from hypothermia and he has provided different accounts to the men's relatives. For example, Bleakley's family said Schuyler told them that their son held on to the boat with his college teammate until he weakened and died. Schuyler has also said that Bleakley helped him survive by talking to him and encouraging him during their last night together.

Marquis Cooper's father has questioned Schuyler's account that his son removed his life jacket. Schuyler has not responded to interview requests.

As time passed, their relatives grew worried because the group was expected home around sunset. One of the men's relatives contacted the Coast Guard around 1:30 a.m. on March 1 and a search began.

Records document the Coast Guard's repeated attempts—and frustrations—as rescuers tried to find the small white boat in a stormy sea with heavy cloud cover and whitecaps making it tough to spot.



Venezuela relief pitcher Francisco Rodriguez celebrates after striking out Puerto Rico's Felipe Lopez for the final out in the eighth inning during the second round of the World Baseball Classic in Miami, Monday, March 16, 2009.

AP

Venezuela beats Puerto Rico, 2-0

MIAMI (AP)—Ramon Hernandez and his Venezuela teammates are headed to the semifinals of the World Baseball Classic.

Hernandez was correctly awarded a home run Monday night following a bungled replay review, and Venezuela delighted a cacophonous crowd of 25,599 by beating Puerto Rico 2-0 to secure a spot in the final four.

Puerto Rico lost for the first time in five WBC games and will face the United States on Tuesday night, with the loser eliminated and the winner advancing to the semifinals this weekend in Los Angeles. The game offers Team USA a chance to avenge an 11-1 loss to Puerto Rico on Saturday that triggered the mercy rule, ending the rout in the seventh inning.

Felix Hernandez and four relievers combined on a five-hitter and stranded 10 runners against Puerto Rico, which came into the game batting .341. Francisco Rodriguez retired all four batters he faced for his third save in the tournament.

Carlos Guillen singled home the first run in the third, and Ramon Hernandez doubled the margin in the seventh—but only after much debate and a 10-minute delay.

Second-base umpire Mark Wegner ruled Hernandez's long drive to left-center in play when the ball ricocheted back onto the field, and he sprinted to third base for an apparent leadoff triple. Replays clearly showed the ball clearing the scoreboard and bouncing off retracted bleachers.

As the Venezuelans protested the call, the umpires conferred, with help from a translator. Three umps then went under the stands for what was supposed to be the WBC's first replay review, which is permitted on home run calls.

The crew returned to the field and ruled the hit a homer, and Hernandez jogged across the plate as fans roared.

But after the game, crew chief Ed Rapuano revealed that the umpires were unable to see the replay on their monitor because the feed from New York wasn't working. So they came to a consensus on their own and changed the call. Rapuano said third base umpire Hitoshi Watarida was sure he saw the ball clear the fence.

Another reversed call hurt Puerto Rico's chances of scoring in the second inning. With Alex Rios on first and none out, Ivan Rodriguez hit a grounder that caromed off Rios' leg as he began to slide into second base. Rios was initially ruled safe, but after the umpires conferred they correctly called him out.

From the first pitch, the pro-Venezuelan crowd danced and sang, blew horns and whistles, chanted and waved flags and cheered with every favorable development. With the mood festive, booing of Magglio Ordonez was less vociferous than in the team's game Saturday.

Many Venezuelans dislike the outfielder because he supports their country's president, Hugo Chavez, and Ordonez drew a mix of cheers and jeers each time he stepped to the plate. He went 0-for-4 and is batting .150 (3-for-20) in the tournament.

The Puerto Ricans drew six walks but stranded five runners in scoring position and two at third. In the eighth they had runners at first and second when Francisco Rodriguez entered with a 2-1 count on Felipe Lopez.

Rodriguez struck him out, then stomped to the dugout in jubilation, his arms outstretched as he looked to the sky and screamed.

Ivan Rodriguez went 1-for-4 in the wake of reports he's closing in on a contract with the Houston Astros. His average in the tournament fell to .526 (10-for-19).

Felix Hernandez (2-0) allowed four hits and four walks in 4 2-3 innings but struck out seven. He left after reaching the tournament's 85-pitch limit and has yet to allow a run in the WBC in 8 2-3 innings over two games.

Puerto Rico starter Ian Snell (0-1) pitched four innings, allowing five hits and two walks but only one run. It came in the third when Bobby Abreu walked, stole second and came home on Guillen's two-out single.

Manager: US *would 'forfeit' if injuries got so bad*

MIAMI (AP)—Team USA manager Davey Johnson already knows what he would do if injuries got so bad in the World Baseball Classic that he ran out of certain position players: He would forfeit.

The injury-plagued Americans were so short-handed Sunday against the Netherlands that backup catcher Brian McCann played left field in the ninth. Asked during the team's batting practice Monday who his third catcher would have been, Johnson said he wouldn't have even tried to put a player in that position for fear of injury—even if it meant elimination.

He used Kevin Youkilis as an example, saying he could never return to Boston if the Red Sox first baseman was injured playing catcher in the WBC.

"I would definitely had to gone out and said we had to forfeit this ballgame," Johnson said. "Yeah, I'd forfeit it."

Added Youkilis: "Yeah, he probably would."

About the only constant in the World Baseball Classic for the United States is that everyone seems to be getting injured.

Chipper Jones, Dustin Pedroia, Ryan Braun and Matt Lindstrom all have been lost to injury—and that was just this weekend. Pedroia was replaced by Brian Roberts before Saturday's game, but tournament rules prevent the team from replacing the others on the roster until the next round.

The slew of sidelined U.S. stars have caused some to wonder if the tournament forces players to unnecessarily risk injury in an exhibition during usual spring training time. Others are questioning offseason conditioning by the Americans, who don't play winter league baseball anywhere close to the rate as Latin and Asian players.

"I'm definitely going to have a list of things to submit to MLB of things that would make it easier for the manager" to avoid injuries, Johnson said.

Among those, Johnson said he would like to see more exhibition games before the tournament, fewer days off and a rule change allowing a manager to reinsert a player into the lineup if an injury occurs during the game.

As for conditioning, some U.S. players say the timing of the tournament puts them at a disadvantage.

Dozens of Latin American players competing in the World Baseball Classic play in winter leagues in South and Central America, even for just the last few weeks of the season in January. Most players from Asia also are playing or practicing by January.

Winter is typically a laid-back time for American players.

"I don't start baseball stuff, I don't start hitting until spring training," U.S. first baseman and outfielder Adam Dunn said, adding that he starts conditioning at full speed after Christmas.

"I can definitely understand you're going kind of half speed in the offseason just kind of getting ready for opening day. It's hard to turn that switch on to full speed. It's just sort of one of those things I'm not sure there's a solution."

The Americans play another elimination game Tuesday night in a rematch against Puerto Rico, with the winner securing a spot in the semifinals in Los Angeles.

The injuries have piled up so much for the Americans that Johnson couldn't say for sure who is going to start Tuesday night, though he said it likely would be Chicago Cubs pitcher Ted Lilly.

Johnson said he has tried to lean "on the side of caution" with injuries, and that he has gone out of his way to make sure players go back to their clubs healthy. With the major league season retaining its importance, it also underscores MLB's hope that the exhibition tournament can become like the World Cup in soccer.

Cuba 7, Mexico 4

At San Diego, Cuba will stick around the World Baseball Classic for at least one more game, thanks to Frederich Cepeda's smoking-hot bat.

Cepeda was 3-for-4 with a walk and four RBIs, including a bases-clearing double in the fifth inning, in leading Cuba to a 7-4 win over Mexico on Monday night in an elimination game.

Cepeda is tied for the lead in the WBC with a .600 average (12-for-20) and tops all WBC batters with 10 RBIs.

The game drew a crowd of only 9,329 to 42,000-seat Petco Park even though San Diego is just across the border from Tijuana and three members of the Padres play for Mexico.

Cuba will play another elimination game on Wednesday night against the loser of Tuesday night's game between Japan and South Korea. The Japan-South Korea winner qualifies for the semifinals at Dodger Stadium on Saturday.

Cuba made it to the championship game of the inaugural WBC in 2006 at Petco Park before losing 10-6 to Daisuke Matsuzaka and Japan.

MLB BRIEFS

Manny's hammy to keep him out at least a week

PHOENIX (AP)—Manny Ramirez's hamstring injury will keep him out of spring training games for at least a week. "We're just going to lay low till we get rid of this," Los Angeles Dodgers manager Joe Torre said Monday. "We're just going to keep him out. I can't give you a time because I don't know the time, but it's certainly going to be through the weekend and probably beyond that." Ramirez aggravated his sore left hamstring Sunday while playing the outfield for the first time this spring. The Dodgers slugger first had trouble with his hamstring last week, when he was scratched from the lineup Thursday in what was supposed to be his exhibition debut. He played Friday as the designated hitter, sat out Saturday and started in left field Sunday against Colorado. While chasing Troy Tulowitzki's fourth-inning double into the left-field corner, Ramirez felt his hamstring grab. He was removed from the game when the Dodgers came to bat.

Hamels to have sore elbow examined

CLEARWATER, Fla. (AP)—Phillies star pitcher Cole Hamels has left training camp to fly to Philadelphia to have his left elbow examined by the team physician. Hamels says this will set him back by a couple of days in training but that he expects to be just fine by opening day. Phillies general manager Ruben Amaro Jr. agrees, saying he doesn't think the persistent soreness is anything serious. He says it was still a good idea to have Hamels fly to Philadelphia on Monday afternoon so Dr. Michael Ciccotti can check him out.

Navy Hill caging down to 8 teams

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



The playoff round in the 2009 Navy Hill Friendship Basketball League will have only eight teams instead of nine, after Uncle Ben pulled out of the 12-team league.

Advancing to the next round are Dollar Days, Docomo, KFC/Taco Bell, Rollers, Inchape, MBI, Athlete's Foot, and IT&E. The San Antonio Shooters (2-9), 670 Rollers (1-10), and Mobil (1-10) were eliminated.

The playoff round was supposed to start last Sunday, but games were cancelled due to rain. The first two matches in the playoffs will be played tomorrow with the third seed KFC/Taco Bell taking on the No. 6 team MBI in the first game at 7pm.

KFC Taco Ball finished the regular season with an 8-3 record, tying the Rollers, but the former won the tiebreak due to the win-over-the-other rule.

In the second game at 8:30pm, Docomo will collide with Athlete's Foot. Docomo placed second in the regular season with its 9-2 slate, while Athlete's Foot was seventh with a 6-5 record, losing to MBI in the tiebreak.

Other pairings are Dollar Days vs. IT&E and Rollers vs. Inchcape.

Dollar Days is the inaugural league's pennant champion after recording an impressive 10-1 mark. It could have received a bye in the first round of the playoffs had Uncle Ben not withdrawn from the league.

Uncle Ben finished eighth in the round-robin regular season with a 6-5 slate and was initially paired against KFC/Taco Bell. IT&E is seeded last after collecting only four wins in 11 games and was originally pitted against Docomo.

The Rollers are seeded fourth and will be dueling the No. 5 team Inchcape this Saturday after the Dollar Days-IT&E tiff.

The playoff round will have a single-elimination format, while the title showdown will be a best-of-three affair.

Games in the Navy Hill caging are played at the Garapan Basketball Court.



Athlete's Foot's Sam Fernandez is sandwiched by MBI's Bing Marasigan, left, and Ernie Moises during their regular season game in the Navy Hill caging last month at the Garapan Basketball Court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

BIG

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5-7 records.

All seven teams will advance to the single-elimination playoffs with the Nationals getting a bye in the first round.

Kelvin Fitial led Docomo's victory with his double-double performance, firing 32 points and collaring 17 rebounds. He made nine of Docomo's 21 points in the fourth quarter, which saw several lead changes, as neither team was willing to give in.

A triple from The Nationals' Jericho Cruz tied the game for the last time at 83-all, with 1:43 left on the clock. The Nationals then committed two errors and missed a couple of shots in the stretch, allowing Docomo to pull off the upset.

After Mel Manibusan brought the lead back to Docomo with his layup, 85-83, the Nationals committed an error on the backcourt with Cruz passing the ball errantly to Iguel. Iguel saved the ball from going out of the sideline in front of Docomo's bench. But the leather landed in the wrong hands with James Villacrusis picking it up and making a layup to increase Docomo's lead, 87-83, with 1:13 left in the game.

The Nationals faltered in their offensive set, grabbed the offensive rebound, but Allen Moses lost the ball to the sideline, while trying to recover a strong pass from Marvin Rabauliman.

Docomo answered with another undergoal stab from Fitial to seal the victory in the last 13.1 seconds of the match.

In the first game, Ol'Aces held the Runnin' Rebels to nine points in the third period, to turn a 34-37 halftime deficit to a 67-46 lead at the end of the third quarter.

Ol'Aces never looked back from thereon to improve to a 7-4 record. They will play their last game tonight against Diamond Auto Care and a win will give Ol'Aces the No. 2 slot in the playoffs.

The Runnin' Rebels will be seeded last and will face either Ol'Aces or IT&E in the playoffs after finishing the regular season with a 2-10 record.

First Game

Ol'Aces 90 – Rangamar 22, White 16, Tudela 12, Renguul 11, Iginoef 10, Olaitiman 10, Omar 5, Camacho 4.

Runnin' Rebels 71 – Tumaquip 23, Coldeen 21, Rangamar 10, Kenty 8, Ogumoro 5, Lisua 4.

Scoring by quarters: 13-19, 34-37, 67-46, 90-71.

Second Game

Docomo 89 – Fitial 32, Wallace 12, Ja. Villacrusis 10, Jo. Villacrusis 10, Paul 9, Lee 6, Manibusan 4, Diaz 4, Mendez 2.

CNMI Nationals 83 – Cruz 31, Moses 16, Rabauliman 14, Iguel 13, Chariton 8, White 1.

Scoring by quarters: 17-24, 43-44, 68-65, 89-83.

DOCOMO

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taliate on that," Lee added.

The incident started after Diamond's Bruce Berline missed his charity and Lee collared the rebound. Lee tried to protect the ball from Diamond's Jawn Joyner, who reached in and was called for a foul.

Pabula went to the table officials to signal the violation called and when he returned to the court, Lee gave him the ball to start the inbound play.

In a telephone interview with Pabula, he said Lee could have bounced the ball to him, instead of handing him the leather with "force" and hitting his stomach.

Mesa, who said that the complaint will be discussed at their monthly meeting set for last night, interpreted Lee's action as an "unsportsmanlike handling of the ball." He added players are not supposed to make physical contact with referees on the court.

But Lee quoted Pabula as saying "you handed the ball to me hard and you hurt my feelings."

"From my understanding and base on the definition of a 'referee' as well as the sports officials code of ethics, provided by the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) Article 1 states that 'sports officials must be free of obligation to any interest other than the impartial and fair judging of sports competitions. Without equivocation, game decisions which are slanted by personal bias are dishonest and unacceptable,'" Lee said.

"In my opinion and based on the facts I had presented, referee Jess Pabula had made his call based on a personal bias and this case should be looked into, and a disciplinary action must be taken. In addition, I feel that his actions, in reference to being a referee, should not be taken lightly, given his calls could dictate the outcome of a game," Lee added in his complaint letter.

Docomo led after the third period until the opening minutes of the fourth quarter before Diamond rallied and took an 84-78 win.

Saipan Tribune called Rangamar to get his comments on the letter, but was unavailable at press time.

But Budweiser caging commissioner Gabriel White said Lee's complaint letter will not change the outcome of the game.

"Docomo's team captain did not sign the official score sheet, indicating they were not protesting the game. So as far as the results of the match are concerned, these were the official and final results. A person can file a complaint to the proper authorities, and in this case to the referees association," White said.

Lee reiterated he is not protesting the game, but is personally filing a complaint against a certain referee.

RANGERS

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Young Guns, 13-1, Monday night at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Roy Celis drove in two runners on a double although he was tagged out while attempting to steal third.

J.P. Sablan and Franco Flores, however, scored in the process for the Rangers' first two runs in the top of the fourth inning en route to seizing solo second place in the team standings, behind pacesetter Rock Steady (3-0).

Juan Iguel singled and reached home on a stolen base, while Ray Alepuyo followed suit on a double by Pete Tomokane, who himself scored on a single by Sablan for three more runs in the fifth.

They added four more runs in the sixth from Celis on a passed ball, Kelvin Kapileo on a single by David Camacho, who also scored on Alepuyo's groundout RBI.

Four more runs for the Rangers came in the seventh that put Young Guns on the brink of defeat because of the 10-run mercy rule.

Carol Ada gave Young Guns its lone run of the game when he stole home in the bottom seventh after a two-out, one-ball, two-strike count on teammate Emery Camacho.

But Yamada completed the win as reigning MVP Tyrone Omar grounded out in a 4-3 play as Young Guns absorbed their third consecutive defeat.

Rock Steady, which dealt the Rangers their first defeat of the season, will try to keep its momentum going when it faces D-9ers (2-1) at 6pm tonight.

D-9ers are tied with Tanapag Falcons with 2-1 win-loss card, good for third.

Falcons 9, Phoenix 5

The Falcons posted back-to-back wins by beating Korean Phoenix, 9-5, last Friday.

Pete Teigita issued 11 strikeouts after eight and a half innings, allowing seven hits, five runs, and seven walks.

The Falcons went to work early by scoring seven runs in the bottom of the first en route to the lopsided win that gave Phoenix their third straight setback.

LIZAMA

From Page 28

in the fourth.

Piteg also made three hits, Secharmidal, Terson Eina, and Jessie Brel had two apiece, while Keola Camacho and Virolanson Secharmidal added one each.

Ol'Aces tied the Jets in second place with a 4-1 win-loss mark.

Jets 7, Dragons 4

Another Lizama came through with a splendid performance as Jose Lizama Jr. of the Jets made up for a listless day on the mound by sparkling on offense

The Jets charged back late in the game to defeat the Dragons, 7-4, on Saturday in the Major Division that made up for their loss to the Red Sox in their previous assignment on March 8.

They took a 4-0 lead in the top of the first on runs by Devyn Flores, Jhace Palacios, Jose Lizama Jr., and Austin Hocog.

After that, it looked like a walk in the park for the Jets until the bottom of the sixth when the Dragons tied the count on runs by Nathan Camacho, Jerald Cabrera, Alden Ngeskebei, and Jonathan Cabrera.

The rally came after Lizama relieved Palacios from pitching duties in the fifth.

Palacios issued eight strikeouts and walked two runners, while Lizama had three strikeouts, gave up three hits, three base on balls, and four runs.

But Lizama more than made up for his dismal showing on the mound by hitting an RBI single as the Jets scored three in the top of the seventh that broke a 4-4 tie and snapped the Dragons' three-game winning run.

Lizama drove home Palacios with a single to right field as the Jets took back the driver's seat. Palacios reached home plate on fielding error then Franco Nakamura singled on the way to scoring the final run via passed ball.

Survivors 8, JPO Enforcers 1

In the battle among unheralded teams, the Survivors prevailed with an easy 8-1 win against JPO Enforcers.

Three Survivors had two runs each, including starting pitcher Caleb Takao, Gayvan Uchau, and Yobech Brel, while Truman Shiro and James Kintaro Jr. added one each.

The win was the Survivors' second in five outings, while dealing the Enforcers their fourth straight loss after its opening day win over the Falcons.

Jaedryen Deleon Guerrero gave the Enforcers' their lone run in the top of the sixth inning.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Boston	50	17	.746	
Philadelphia	33	31	.516	15 1/2
New York	28	38	.424	21 1/2
New Jersey	28	38	.424	21 1/2
Toronto	24	43	.358	26
Central Division				
y-Cleveland	53	13	.803	
Detroit	33	32	.508	19 1/2
Milwaukee	31	38	.449	23 1/2
Chicago	30	37	.448	23 1/2
Indiana	28	40	.412	26
Southeast Division				
x-Orlando	49	17	.742	
Atlanta	39	28	.582	10 1/2
Miami	36	30	.545	13
Charlotte	28	38	.424	21
Washington	16	51	.239	33 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division				
San Antonio	44	21	.677	
Houston	43	25	.632	2 1/2
New Orleans	41	24	.631	3
Dallas	40	27	.597	5
Memphis	17	48	.262	27
Northwest Division				
Denver	42	25	.627	
Portland	41	25	.621	0 1/2
Utah	41	26	.612	1 1/2
Minnesota	20	46	.303	21 1/2
Oklahoma City	18	48	.273	23 1/2
Pacific Division				
y-LA Lakers	53	13	.803	
Phoenix	36	31	.537	17 1/2
Golden State	23	43	.348	30
LA Clippers	16	50	.242	37
Sacramento	14	52	.212	39

Yesterday's Games
Houston 95, New Orleans 84
Oklahoma City 78, San Antonio 76
Charlotte 112, Toronto 86
Portland 103, Memphis 92
Denver 121, New Jersey 96

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

NAVY HILL STANDINGS

Dollar Days	10	1
Docomo	9	2
Taco Bell/KFC	8	3
RBC Rollers	8	3
Inchcape	7	4
MBI	6	5
Athlete's Foot	6	5
Uncle Ben	5	6
IT& E	4	7
San Antonio Shooters	2	9
670 Rollers	1	10
Mobil	1	10

BUDWEISER CAGING STANDINGS

CNMI Nationals	9	3
Ol'Aces	7	4
IT& E	7	5
Diamond Auto Fixers	6	5
Quichocho Law Office	5	7
Docomo	5	7
Runnin' Rebels	2	10

SML BUDWEISER STANDINGS

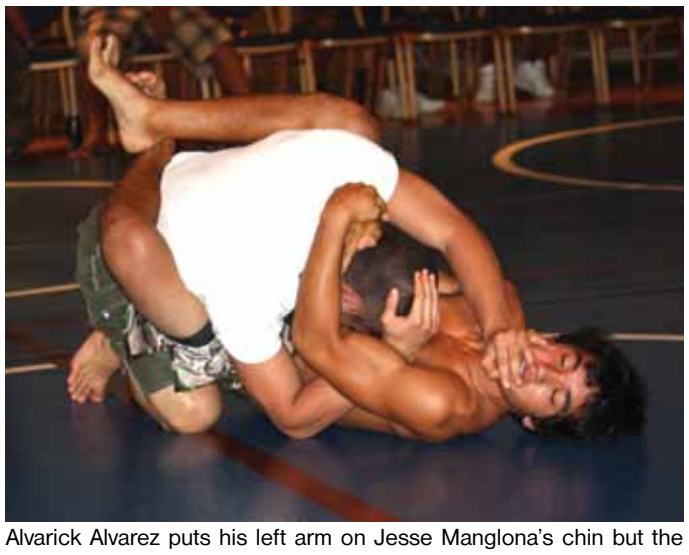
Rock Steady	3	0
Ford Rangers	3	1
Tanapag Falcons	2	1
D-9ers	2	1
Masters	1	2
Korean Phoenix	0	3
Young Guns	0	3

The Art of War III: All-Island Grappling Submissions Challenge

PHOTOS By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.



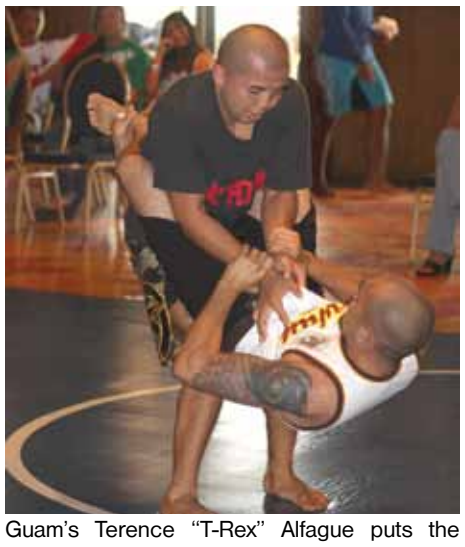
Luis "The Shreddar" Blanco leaps to maneuver against Justin "The Shocker" Cruz in the Superfight exhibition of The Art of War III: All-Island Grappling Submissions Challenge held last Saturday at Fiesta Resort and Spa's Hibiscus Hall. Blanco won the bout.



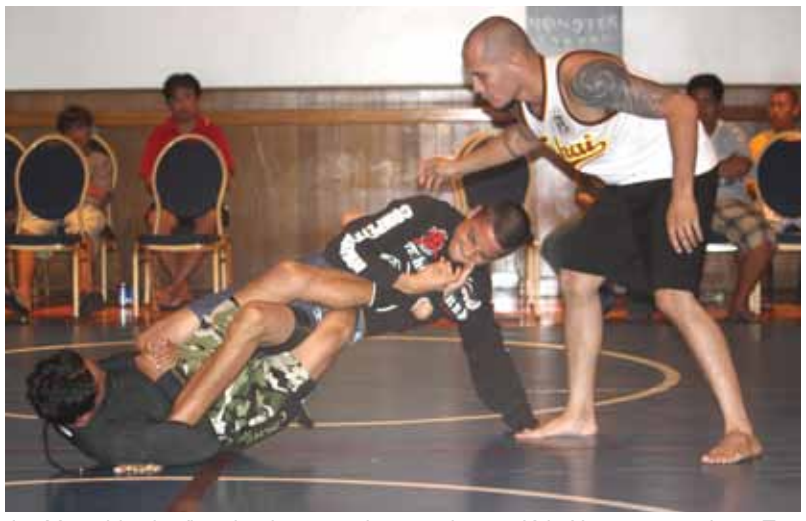
Alvarick Alvarez puts his left arm on Jesse Manglona's chin but the latter won this match for the featherweight gold.



Kelvin Fitial, left, and Evangelis Babauta in action. Fitial won the bout en route to winning the gold in the heavyweight class.



Guam's Terence "T-Rex" Alfague puts the clamps on Japanese Tetsuji Kato's thighs during their superfight. Kato won the fight.



Jay Muna hits the floor but he scored a 9-4 win over Kyle Nanauta as referee Terence "T-Rex" Alfague looks on. Muna later lost the bronze to Mike Sanchez in the featherweight class.



Chris "No Luv" Laayug leans tightly against Min Joo Jung of Korea to win the gold in the super lightweight division.



The medalist in the bantamweight class, from left, Shane Alvarez (bronze), Jesse Manglona (gold), and Reagan Mality (silver).



From left are the winners in the lightweight category, Patrick Alepuyo (bronze), Ryan "The Dentist" Urquizu (gold), and Geovanni Sablan (silver).



Heavyweights medal winners, from left, Evangelis Babauta (bronze), Kelvin Fitial (gold), and Francis Mendiola (silver).



The medalists in the middleweight class, from left, Ron Chisato (bronze), Eric Attao Sian (gold), and Syl "The Deal" Teregeyo (silver).



Rockets down Hornets, 95-84

Ron Artest scored all of his 18 points in the second half, and the Houston Rockets overcame the absence of center Yao Ming in a 95-84 victory over the New Orleans Hornets on Monday night. **24**

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Navy Hill caging down to 8 teams

The playoff round in the 2009 Navy Hill Friendship Basketball League will have only eight teams instead of nine, after Uncle Ben pulled out of the 12-team league. **26**



Big win for Docomo, Ol'Aces triumph

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Docomo Pacific ended their campaign in the regular season of the 2008-2009 BANMI/Budweiser Basketball League with a big win over the CNMI Nationals, 89-83, Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Docomo became only the second team to beat the Nationals this season. Quichocho Law Office handed the Nationals their first two losses in the league. The Nationals finished the regular season with a 9-3 slate, but kept the No. 1 seeding in the playoffs. Docomo and Quichocho are tied for fifth to sixth place with their identical

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Docomo's Kelvin Fitial, center, muscles his way to the basket against the CNMI Nationals' James Camacho, left, and Jericho Cruz during their game in the Budweiser caging Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Docomo player crying foul over 'undeserved' technical

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Docomo player James Lee filed a complaint against a referee who officiated their game versus Diamond Auto Care in the 2008-2009 BANMI/Budweiser Basketball League Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.



Lee

The letter of complaint, which stemmed from technical foul called by referee Jess Pabula on Lee, was submitted to Basketball Association of Northern Marianas Islands president Elias Rangamar and BANMI Referee Association chairman Arnold Mesa Monday.

"On Friday [March 13], during a game between the Diamond Auto Fixers and Docomo, referee Jess Pabula gave me a technical foul in the middle of the third quarter after giving the basketball to him. When I asked why I was issued a technical foul after giving him the ball, he replied by stating that I handed the ball to him 'a little too hard,'" Lee stated in a two-page letter of complaint.

"In my defense I handed the ball to him with no resistant or any looks or body language that might have seemed threatening, disrespectful, or harassing to the referee. In addition, I aided the referee by giving him the ball right after he called a foul on our opponent. So why would I re-

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Lizama blasts two homers as Ol'Aces win

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Centerfielder Jeremy Lizama recorded two homeruns to help Ol'Aces exact a 14-4 drubbing of Tanapag Falcons in the Major Division of the 2009 Saipan Little League last Saturday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Baseball Field.

Lizama went 3-for-3 with three runs and five RBIs to lead Ol'Aces in the mercy run-shortened game against the Falcons.

His first hit was a three-run homer that sent Austin Piteg and Virgil Secharmidal home. He scored a runner anew in the third and hit another homer

See LIZAMA on Page 26



Survivor starting pitcher Caleb Takao scores in this file photo in a losing effort against Century Ace last week.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

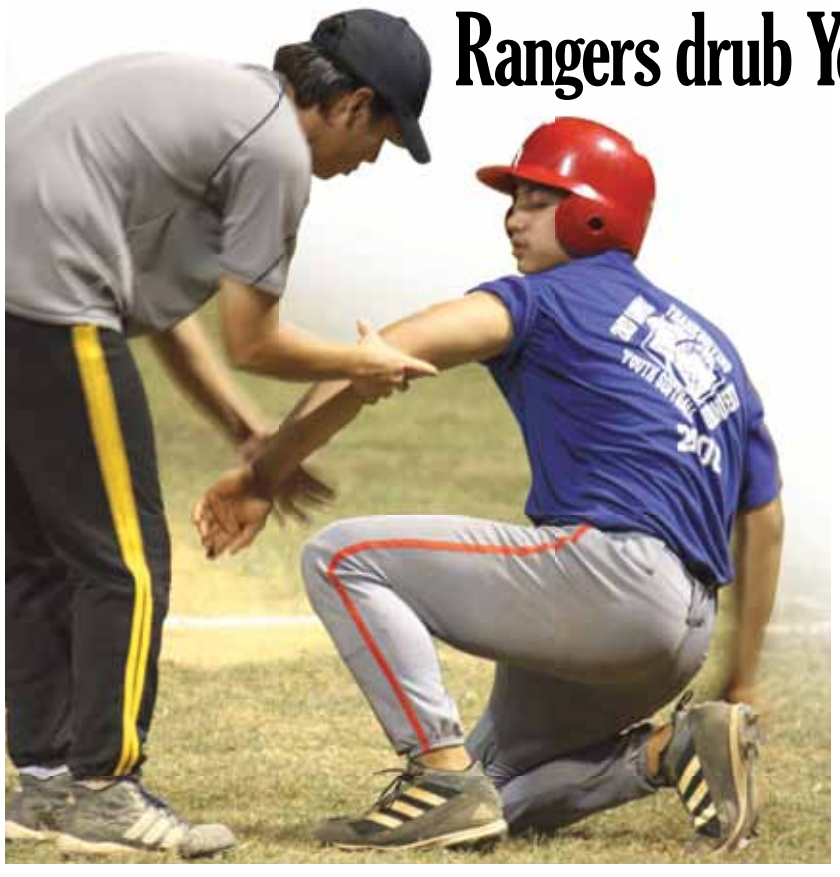
Rangers drub Young Guns, 13-1

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Ford Rangers were solid in defense as well as in offense as they cruised to their third straight victory in the 2009 Budweiser Saipan Major League.

Shane Yamada was steady on the mound with eight strikeouts allowing four hits, a walk, and a run, while his teammates took care of the offense as the Rangers drubbed

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Ford Rangers' first base coach checks the left arm of David Camacho after he was hit by a pitch in the top of the seventh inning of their 13-1 blowout win against the Young Guns Monday night in the 2009 Saipan Major League at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.